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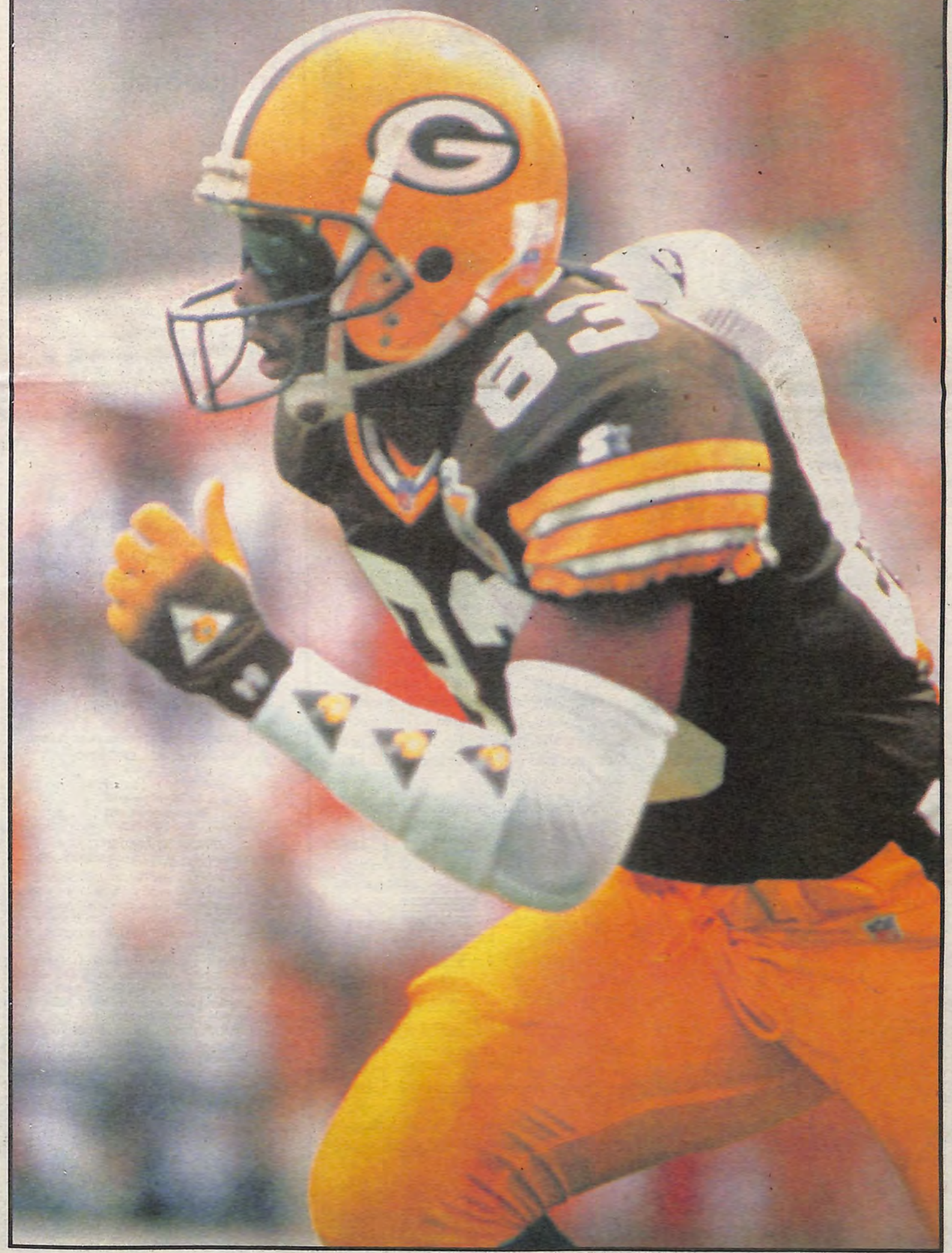
Ray Nitschke's

PACKER REPORT

A NEWSPAPER DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE GREEN BAY PACKERS AND THE NFL.

Vol. 21 No. 15 November 20, 1993



Packers 19, Saints 17

Favre needed big day

Another former Bear signs

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Commentary

This should be a big confidence builder

NAWLINS — After coming off a very difficult defeat in the Monday-night game, Sunday's victory at New Orleans was outstanding. To play with the intensity they did is really a credit to the team and to the coaches who prepared them.

This was a very important victory, against a very tough opponent, in a difficult, hostile environment. The Saints are playing pretty well. In most phases of the game, so are the Packers.

This shows you what the Packers can do. Defensively I thought the Packers played very well, other than the one long run. I have to take my hat off to Reggie White and Johnny Holland, LeRoy Butler and the rest of the defensive team. They kept the Packers, who had trouble moving the ball, in the game.

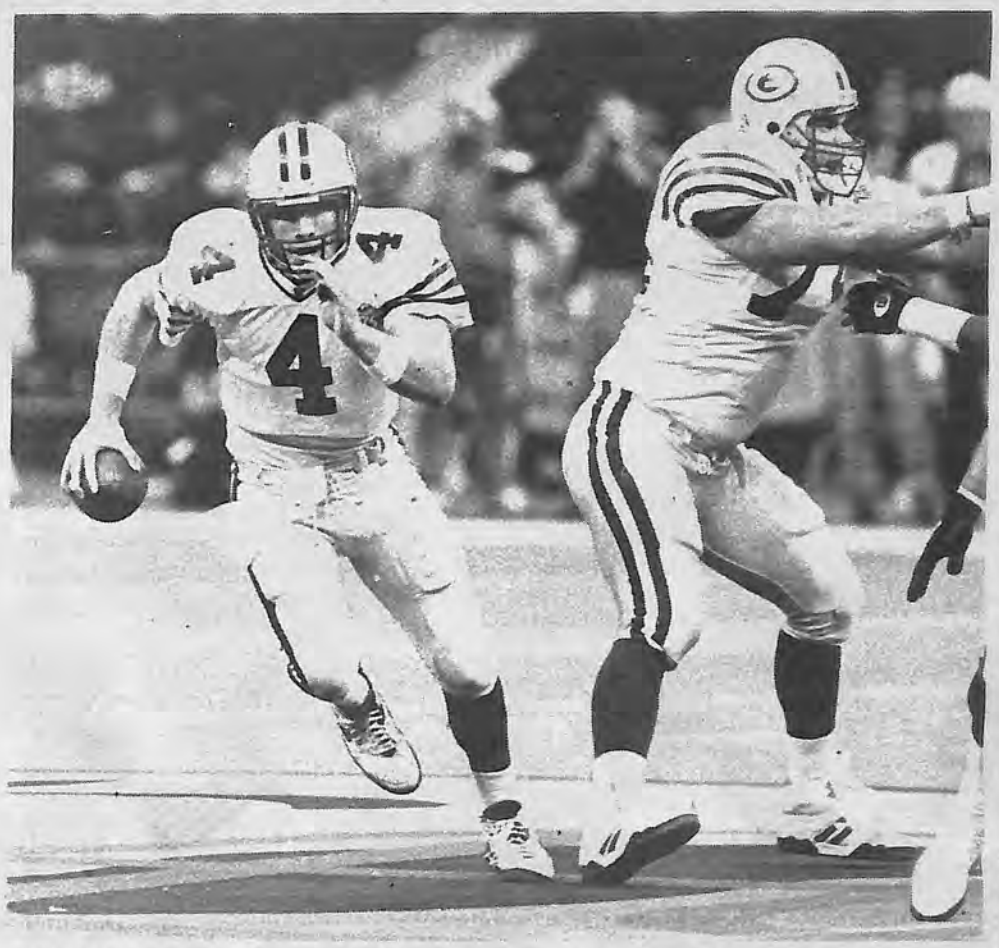
RAY NITSCHKE

When the Packers had to do something at the end, Brett Favre and Sterling Sharpe came up with the big plays.

This win took the whole team, including special teams. Chris Jacke hit four field goals and you can't say enough about the play of Robert Brooks. He did not get what he wanted — a starting WR job — but he isn't down in the mouth about it and he showed what you can make out of a situation — performing very well in the role he has been given.

Defensively, the Packers are playing excellent and are getting better each week, which is really good.

Now it's a matter of getting the offense together. There was one major miscue with a fumble. Other than that, Green Bay didn't turn the ball over. And Brett threw no interceptions.



Brett Favre was Green Bay's second-leading rusher Sunday and had the best per-carry average. He finished with 24 yards on five carries for a 4.8 average. Edgar Bennett led the team with 25 yards on six carries, a 4.2 average.

– Wally Porter photo

But the offense needs continuity. In this game they didn't run the ball well but they did the things they had to to win.

A very impressive win. A total team effort.

This past week, some outside the team were down on Favre. But I tell you what: He showed a lot of poise on the final drive for the touchdown. That not only helps him, but makes up for a lot of the things he did on Monday night. He's learning. He came through this test with flying colors. He came back from a very frustrating game in Kansas City. He showed a lot of character and the other players around him see that. The players rally around him. He has shown he can do the job when the thing is on the line.

Which naturally for Brett is a confidence builder. But it is also a big plus for those around him too. He needed a performance like this and he knew it and he came up with it.

The Packers are getting down to the final stretch now. Just seven games left. They need things like this. I see the Packers on the right track. Their destiny is in their own hands. They go against Detroit, the Division leader this Sunday — in a game I think will be seen in most of the country on CBS because Pat Summerall and John Madden will be working the game down at Milwaukee County Stadium.

This was a big game. I think the Packers are in the right position and in the right frame of mind — this would have been very difficult had this been a loss. It would have been two in a row. This is a young team which needs some confidence builders. I think this will carry them a long way.

The next four games they can win. This was a very pivotal game here. I am pleased the Packers won — especially after that difficult loss at Kansas City.

NFL standings

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
Central						
Detroit	7	2	0	.778	187	140
Green Bay	5	4	0	.556	199	161
Minnesota	5	4	0	.556	155	177
Chicago	4	5	0	.444	142	124
Tampa Bay	2	7	0	.222	120	251
Eastern						
Dallas	7	2	0	.778	206	126
N.Y. Giants	6	3	0	.667	180	118
Philadelphia	4	5	0	.444	155	191
Phoenix	3	7	0	.300	183	176
Washington	2	7	0	.222	145	229
Western						
New Orleans	6	3	0	.667	200	173
San Francisco	6	3	0	.667	255	179
Atlanta	3	6	0	.333	184	222
L.A. Rams	2	7	0	.222	131	205

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
Eastern						
Buffalo	7	1	0	.875	172	97
Miami	7	2	0	.778	201	159
N.Y. Jets	5	4	0	.556	217	158
Indianapolis	3	6	0	.333	145	210
New England	1	8	0	.111	113	200
Central						
Pittsburgh	5	3	0	.625	192	136
Cleveland	5	4	0	.556	168	181
Houston	5	4	0	.556	206	157
Cincinnati	0	9	0	.000	100	224
Western						
Kansas City	7	2	0	.778	164	144
Denver	5	4	0	.556	229	175
L.A. Raiders	5	4	0	.556	172	178
Seattle	5	5	0	.500	165	169
San Diego	4	5	0	.444	157	183

Ray Nitschke's PACKER REPORT

A Royle Publication devoted exclusively to the Green Bay Packers and the NFL.

Vol. 21 No. 15 Nov. 20, 1993

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Wide receiver Mark Clayton
-- David J. Garot photo

In the middle ...

Nose tackle Bill Maas.
-- David J. Garot photo

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Favre leads Sharpe comeback

Late long pass sets up field goal

by Al Pahl
Managing Editor

NEW ORLEANS — It takes both mental and physical toughness to be an NFL star.

Brett Favre and Sterling Sharpe showed those talents and more here Sunday, leading the Packers' escape from the hostile Superdome with a 19-17 come-from-behind victory.

Mark Clayton said Sharpe told him that blurry vision forced him to close one eye in order to focus on a 43-yard pass from Favre with 52 seconds to play. Sharpe ran 11 more yards after making the catch, carrying Green Bay from its own 27 to the Saint 19, setting up the game-winning field goal. Chris Jacke knocked the 36-yarder, his fourth of the day and 14th in a row, through the uprights with six seconds to play.

Favre, under the gun all last week from fans who turned on him because he threw three interceptions and committed two fumbles in a losing effort at Kansas City, rolled to the left on the play, not so much because of pressure, he said, but to be able to see and also to buy some time and allow a receiver to get open. He ran left, shook off one would-be tackler who got just part of a hand on him and then winged the ball downfield without having time to plant himself well.

When Favre ran, New Orleans' free safety apparently came toward him, allowing Sharpe to come open deep. The gritty wide receiver, who missed practice all week because of a toe injury suffered at Kansas City, had sat out a significant portion of the game, first because of a bloody nose and then because of the double-vision (he got poked in the eye).

"Basically we had to throw the ball down the field and they knew that too," Favre explained. "They have one of the best pass rushes in the NFL so when I dropped back, I knew that if it was going to take awhile, I was going to have to run out and try to make something happen. And that's basically what happened. On the three or four previous plays, that's what I was trying to do but no one really beat anyone deep. On that particular play, we had two guys going deep and I think when I scrambled, it probably fooled their safeties into looking for an underneath pass. Sterling got behind them and you know what happened then.

Hoping something would happen

"When you scramble out there, you're hoping, but I didn't leave the huddle thinking Sterling was going to be that wide open."

Said quarterback Coach Steve Mariucci, "When the coverage broke down, he found Sterling. He kept his eyes upfield and kept enough composure and wherewithal to see what happened. Kind of like (Jim) McMahon did (late in the Sept. 26 game). That's a good sign because there were no timeouts left and it was a difficult spot."

Explained Coach Mike Holmgren, "We had a vertical stretch — all four guys (going deep). When Brett broke the pocket, usually that is a little bit of a bad sign. Then when he threw the ball and I saw Sterling out there, it was an unbelievable feeling.

"And then Sterling made the catch, which was important."

Perhaps Sterling Sharpe's greatest talent is running with the ball, like this, after the catch. Sharpe overcame a toe injury, bloody nose and blurred vision Sunday, leading all players in receiving yards with 79, including the game's biggest play, a 54-yard catch-and-run in the final minute which set up the game-winning field goal in Sunday's 19-17 win at New Orleans.

-- Wally Porter photo

The coach was unsure whether Sharpe's vision was still impaired at game's end. "If it was, I'm glad he caught the right ball," Holmgren said.

Favre didn't know either. "I have a hard enough time keeping up with myself," he said. "He's a hell of a player. He's the guy we really go to in those situations. I don't give a (crap) if he's having vision problems or not, he made the play."

"It was nice to win one at the end"

Said Holmgren, "It was sure nice to win one at the end. We've lost some tough ones at the end this year.

"The great thing about it is the Saints are a good team. They are a tough team. Always have been. The fact we could stay in there, battle them down here, that says something about our group. I'm proud of them."

Asked how effective Sharpe was, physically, Holmgren replied, "That's a good question. He didn't practice all week. He played hurt. He made some plays. He gave us everything he could. He had a variety of ailments — a lot of our guys did today."

After losing the turnovers battle at Kansas City, 6-0, the Packers were determined not to repeat such an outing. They won here, 5-1, on the strength of two interceptions and three fumble recoveries. Favre threw nary an interception and his team lost only one fumble.

More importantly, the Packers tended to score points off the turnovers. Both interceptions led to field goals and one of the fumble recoveries led to Green Bay's lone touchdown.

"The defense rose up and played well. We have a good defense," Holmgren said. "The game played out about the way I thought it would."

Injuries a problem going in, out

The big pass play came on second-and-20 from the Packer 27, showing the offense could overcome the setback of Doug Widell's 10-yard holding penalty on first down. Widell started and played the entire game at left guard because Rich Moran's knee, which forced him to miss five of the season's first eight games, acted up again last week. He was able to practice only on Thursday and did not make the trip here.

During Sunday's game, Bryce Paup and Wayne Simmons suffered hamstring injuries and Matt Brock and Jackie Harris injured one knee apiece. The extent of those four injuries was not immediately known here.

Simmons spent the entire second half on the sidelines. He was replaced by Keo Coleman. Tony Bennett played for Paup. Gilbert Brown took Brock's spot. Harris played off and on, including playing on the final drive. Ed West played when he did not.

Sharpe "really sucked it up," Mariucci lauded. "We had a lot of guys play hurt — a lot of guys really sucking it up. From a coach's standpoint we are really proud of a lot of these guys because, boy, we were banged up and hurt and they just kept going. It was a

Continued on page 10

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GAME STATISTICS

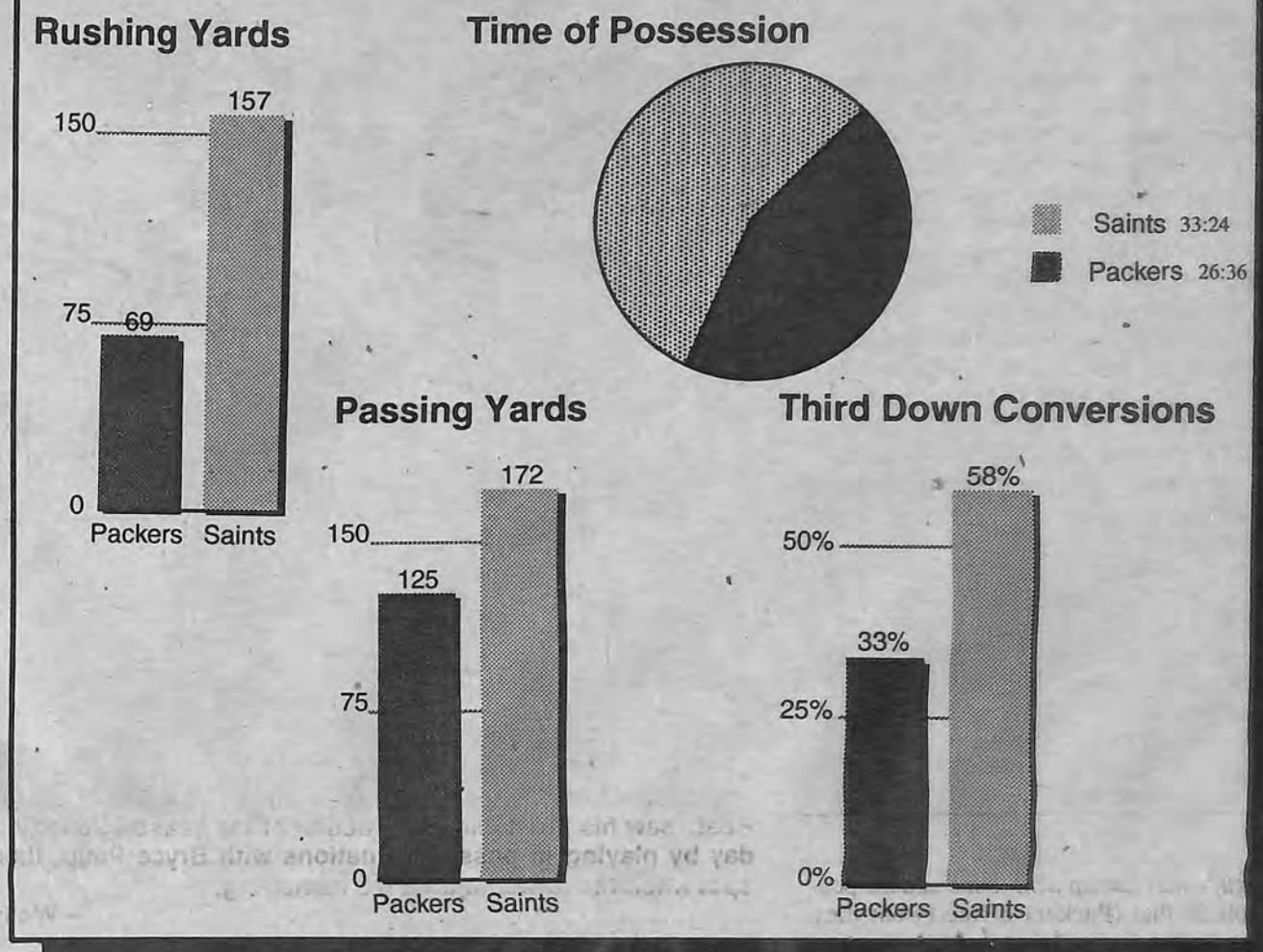
• SCORING SUMMARY

Green Bay Packers	**3**	**7**	**3**	**6**	**19**
New Orleans Saints	**0**	**14**	**0**	**3**	**17**

Packers, 1, 0:11, Jacke 38-yard field goal (11-45, 6:08) 3-0
Saints, 2, 13:10, Early 24-yard pass from Wilson (Andersen, kick) (4-90, 2:01) 3-7
Packers, 2, 6:34, Harris 1-yard pass from Favre (Jacke, kick) (6-22, 2:55) 10-7
Saints, 2, 0:16, Dowdell 11-yard pass from Wilson (Andersen, kick) (4-26, 0:26) 10-14
Packers, 3, 8:43, Jacke 20-yard field goal (12-46, 6:17) 13-14
Packers, 4, 8:01, Jacke 44-yard field goal (4-4, 1:46) 16-14
Saints, 4, 3:38, Andersen 27-yard field goal (9-27, 4:23) 16-17
Packers, 4, 0:03, Jacke 36-yard field goal (10-56, 1:34) 19-17
Attendance: 69,043; Tickets Distributed: 69,043; Time: 3:08
Weather: Indoors 82; Humidity 82; Wind: SE 17 mph

FINAL TEAM STATISTICS

	Packers	Saints
TOTAL FIRST DOWNS	13	19
By Rushing	3	8
By Passing	9	11
By Penalty	1	0
THIRD DOWN EFFICIENCY	5-15-33%	11-19-58%
FOURTH DOWN EFFICIENCY	1-1-100%	0-0-0%
TOTAL NET YARDS	194	329
Total Offensive Plays (inc. time thrown passing)	59	69
Average gain per offensive play	3.3	4.8
NET YARDS RUSHING	69	157
Total Rushing Plays	21	35
Average gain per rushing play	3.3	4.5
NET YARDS PASSING	125	172
Times thrown — yards lost attempting to pass	6-25	5-25
Gross yards passing	150	197
PASS ATTEMPTS-COMPLETIONS-HAD INT.	32-18-0	29-20-2
Average gain per pass play (inc. # thrown passing)	3.3	5.1
KICKOFFS-In End Zone-Touchbacks	6-2-0	4-3-2
PUNTS Number and Average	5-50.2	3-42
Had Blocked	0	0
FGs-PATs Had Blocked	0-0	0-0
TOTAL RETURN YARDAGE (Not Including Kickoffs)	78	35
No. and Yards Punt Returns	2-48	3-35
No. and Yards Kickoff Returns	2-61	6-125
No. and Yards Interception Returns	2-30	0-0
PENALTIES Number and Yards	6-33	4-42
FUMBLES Number and Lost	2-1	4-3
TOUCHDOWNS	1	2
Rushing	0	0
Passing	1	2
DEFENSIVE/KICKING GAME	0/0	0/0
EXTRA POINTS Made-Attempts	1-1	2-2
FIELD GOALS Made-Attempts	4-4	1-2
SAFETIES	0	0
FINAL SCORE	19	17
TIME OF POSSESSION	26:36	33:24



GREEN BAY PACKERS

RUSHING	Att.	Net Yds.	Avg.	Long Gain	TD
Bennett	6	25	4.2	7	0
Favre	5	24	4.8	16	0
Thompson	9	20	2.2	7	0
Wilson	1	0	0.0	0	0

PASSING	Att.	Com.	Yds.	TKD	Yds.	TD	LG	Had Int.
Favre	32	18	150	6	25	1	54	0

PASS RECEIVING	No.	Yds.	LG	TD
Sharpe	6	79	54	0
Harris	4	25	12	1
Thompson	3	18	9	0
Brooks	2	16	10	0
Clayton	1	9	9	0
West	1	7	7	0
Bennett	1	-4	-4	0

INTERCEPTIONS	No.	Yds.	LG	TD
Butler	1	19	19	0
Hoiland	1	11	11	0

PUNTING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TB	In 20	LG
Wagner	5	251	50.2	1	1	60

PUNT RETURNS	No.	FC	Yds.	LG	TD
Brooks	2	0	48	35	0
Downed	1	0	0	0	0

KICKOFF RETURNS	No.	FC	Yds.	LG	TD
Brooks	2	0	61	45	0
Touchback	2	0	0	0	0

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

RUSHING	Att.	Net Yds.	Avg.	Long Gain	TD
Brown	21	106	5.0	60	0
Muster	9	22	2.4	7	0
Hilliard	2	15	7.5	8	0
Wilson	3	14	4.7	9	0

PASSING	Att.	Com.	Yds.	TKD	Yds.	TD	LG	Had Int.
Wilson	29	20	197	5	25	2	24	2

PASS RECEIVING	No.	Yds.	LG	TD
Martin	7	70	14	0
Dowdell	3	28	11	1
Smith	3	23	9	0
Brown	3	19	10	0
Early	2	35	24	1
Muster	1	11	11	0
Turner	1	11	11	0

PUNTING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TB	In 20	LG
Barnhardt	3	126	42.0	0	1	55

PUNT RETURNS	No.	FC	Yds.	LG	TD
Hughes	3	1	35	12	0
Touchback	1	0	0	0	0

KICKOFF RETURNS	No.	FC	Yds.	LG	TD
McAfee	4	0	108	55	0
Hilliard	1	0	17	17	0

GREEN BAY PACKERS
Unofficial

	T	A	SK	YL	INT.	PD	FR
Koonce	8	5	1.0	0.0	0	0	0
Holland	8	2	1.0	1.0	1	1	1
White	6	2	2.0	16.0	0	0	0
Mitchell	6	1	0.0	0.0	0	1	0
Bennett	4	3	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Butler	5	1	0.0	0.0	1	2	0
Jurkovic	5	1	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Buckley	3	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Brock	2	0	1.0	8.0	0	0	0
Evans	2	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	1
Paup	2	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Teague	2	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Willis	2	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Prior	1	1	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Coleman	1	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Davey	1	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Maas	0	1	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Simmons	0	1	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Chmura	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Favre	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Hauck	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Jacke	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Morrissey	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Wilson	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS
Unofficial

	T	A	SK	YL	INT.	PD	FR
Jackson	7	1	3.0	14.0	0	1	1
Williams	6	2	2.0	8.0	0	0	0
Johnson	5	1	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Taylor	3	3	0.0	0.0	0	1	0
Atkins	3	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Cook	3	0	0.0	0.0	0	1	0
Goff	3	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Spencer	3	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Turnbull	3	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Buck	2	1	0.0	0.0	0	1	0
Martin	2	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Miller	2	0	1.0	3.0	0	0	0
Wilks	0	2	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Jones	0	1	0.0	0.0	0	1	0
Andersen	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Barnhardt	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Freeman	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Hilgenberg	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Hilliard	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Hughes	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Kennard	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0
Turner	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0

Favre needed to hit some big plays

NEW ORLEANS — Don't sell Brett Favre short.

On the field or off.

Off the field, he really is a down-home country boy, but that doesn't mean he has no clue about the big picture. Brett Favre understands the big picture.

It's like I said this past week: There will be bandwagon people, now I'm the savior and 'you're our quarterback again.' I don't listen to it," he said.

"That was a great game. I'm happy for my teammates and the people associated with the Packers. And we have our fans but they can be fickle. We won three games in a row and we lost one and all of a sudden we're terrible and I'm the worst thing since whatever. You can't listen to it. Sure it's upsetting but I care about the

AL PAHL

guys who line up next to me and the people in that (Packer) office (what they say). And that's all that matters.

"I knew that eventually I would show how good I was and I'd make the plays," Favre said.

Favre understands, in other words, that the quarterback, especially in today's NFL, generally gets too much praise or too much blame. Holmgren said that. "He felt as bad as anyone (after Kansas City)," Holmgren said. He shoulders a lot of the responsibility for how the team does — and rightfully so, he's the quarterback.

It was good he made that throw, huh?

"But he's a young guy. We had our father-son talk on Thursday. We were both probably too mad to talk prior to that. He's a great kid. He'll have a lot more good days than he will bad.

"He bounced back and was a very happy camper after that," Holmgren said.

"It was good he made that big throw, huh?" quarterbacks Coach Steve Mariucci said.

"It was good for his confidence because it was a tough game. This one was not going to be pretty because they are so good on defense. He knew it wasn't going to be easy but he had to be steady and not make the big mistake.

"They did slap one ball out of his hands and that was unfortunate. He's got to continue improving, moving up in the pocket better and that type of thing. But he didn't give them an interception. He did what he had to do to win and that's the bottom line," Mariucci said.

"This showed we can come from behind and get one."

Mariucci thinks the way the team won will "certainly help his (Favre's) confidence, his teammates' belief in him and all of those kinds of things," Mariucci said. "Especially coming from behind with no timeouts and the whole thing and we put a drive together at the end when it wasn't going to be easy. After we scored the field goal on the first drive of the second half, we were three-and-out and three-and-out. We couldn't get anything going until the end.

"And we handled the crowd. This was a tough, tough challenge in every way. To win, I'm proud of them. It was a team effort. A big-time team effort. Hopefully this will kick-start us because all we needed was a big win, I think, in a situation like this where we can say, 'Hey we can beat anybody anytime.' And I believe that's what's going to happen."

Linebacker Tony Bennett, here battling 299-pound rookie tackle Willie Roaf, saw his most extensive action of the season Sunday. He started the day by playing in passing situations with Bryce Paup, then took Paup's *spot when the lowan injured his hamstring.*

– Wally Porter photo

Favres overcome tough times

It was a little bit of a tough week for the Favre family. Son Brett was maligned by Packer fans after fumbling twice and throwing three interceptions in Monday night's loss to Kansas City.

Gone from the main road that intersects with "Irving Farve Road" is the Farve street sign. The sign marked the dirt road the family lives on. But thieves stole the whole pole and everything from right there in the ground just west of Northport Lumber in Hancock County, Mississippi, about 70 miles east of here.

And the day did not start — literally — particularly well for the Favre family, which was staying at the Packers' overflow hotel here. Irvin Favre, Brett's dad, was last seen getting a jump-start for his van which wouldn't start. Brett had not talked with Irvin before the game.

Harlan didn't watch final field goal

In the end, Packer President Bob Harlan couldn't bear to watch. Pacing the runway area outside his team's locker room beyond the north end zone, he walked briskly with his head down.

Even though Jacke was kicking toward the south goalposts at the end of the field farthest from Harlan. The president had a great perspective from which to watch the kick because he had the perfect angle from which to judge whether it was wide. But he chose not to take advantage of that, preferring to pace with his head down and his hands behind his back.

Harlan did not look up until after the Saints' partisans told him the kick was good by their lack of cheering. No deafening roar cascading down from Olympian heights under the dome told the veteran football man that Jacke had nailed his fourth kick of the game.

Not thinking through Harlan's lack-of-noise reasoning on the spur of the moment, this reporter flashed him the thumbs-up. Harlan winked and continued to pace, appearing not altogether relaxed even though there were only three seconds left.

Moments later, he was beaming in the end zone, congratulating Holmgren, as the coach made his way toward the locker room.

Holmgren, by the way, watched the kick. "There are a couple guys I would want to kick the ball in that situation and Chris is certainly one of them," the coach said. "He's been outstanding this year for us."

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"As long as you get the ball past the 30 and you don't fumble, it's okay. (But) if I fumble one of those babies, I'm in trouble."

--Nose tackle John Jurkovic, 280-pound kick returner extraordinare

Yurko

Undrafted NT tries to make the most of his opportunities

LEE REMMEL

Square-cut John Jurkovic, the Packers' colorful third-year nose tackle, could well have emerged from the pages of a Damon Runyon story.

For those *PR* readers, and editors, who may be too young to know, Damon Runyon was the one-time Boswell of Broadway, the author of "Guys and Dolls" — among other stories — which became an enduring musical, and the creator of such legendary characters therefrom as Harry the Horse and Nicely-Nicely Johnson, who captured the flavor of New York's sporting crowd.

Jurkovic, who has become something of a Wisconsin folk hero as the witty and voluble host or co-host of television and radio shows, admittedly is not a refugee from Manhattan. But the Calumet City, Ill., product has the same street-wise demeanor, the same flair for ironic humor and the same disposition to tell it like it is which is reflected by Runyon's "people."

All of which may have helped him quickly adapt to the changes in his status that have occurred in 1993, traceable in large part to the advent of unrestricted free agency, which brought the estimable Reggie White and Bill Maas here.

Jurkovic, a former free agent who a year earlier had beaten out high draft pick Esera Tuaolo for the starting job at nose tackle, first found himself asked to turn over his No. 92 jersey to White, a substantial concession in itself.

That was in early April when the Reverend, who had been ardently courted by a host of the Packers' NFL rivals, arrived in Titletown to announce he was casting his lot with the Green 'n' Gold.

Yurko, both pragmatic and a good sport, showed up that night to present Reggie with the '92' he had worn the previous two seasons.

There also were indications about the same time that Maas, a 10-year veteran brought aboard from the Chiefs just ahead of White, would be moving in as the starter at nose tackle ahead of John.

You do what you can, go from there

To his credit, Jurkovic has handled these developments with impressive resilience and aplomb. Moreover, he is even able to quip about them, with something akin to Runyon-esque philosophy.

Reflecting upon turning over his '92' to White, he facetiously grumbled, "I'm still waiting for something for that...It's killing me."

Then he appended, in apparent contradiction, "It was no big deal to me...It's just a number. So I said, 'Reggie, it's yours.'

"You know me," he deadpanned. "Anything for the team."

Jurkovic treated the Maas situation with similar off-handedness.

"They bring in Bill to get a little more pass rush out of the nose tackle position," he acknowledged. "What's a person to do? You come into training camp and you compete. That's all you can do.

"Bill's a quality player, a great player. I have no qualms about that. They knew what they wanted out of him and they knew what they wanted out of me...I accepted the role I was given and have gone on from there.

"There's no use fretting over it. You either handle it or you don't handle it. I chose to handle it. Boom, you deal with it and you go on."

Asked if there had been any period of adjustment on his part, Jurkovic promptly rejoined, "None whatsoever ... (When it happened) they talked to me real quick — five minutes — and you go on."

"Yurko," as he has become known throughout the Packer organization and beyond, actually has played more than the original scenario might have anticipated. A backup in the first five games, he found himself starting against the Buccaneers and Bears while Maas was rested to soothe a tender Achilles tendon.

Asked if he is content in his role, Jurkovic wisecracked, "I like being on the team, put it that way. I'm a football player and I want to play football...I get opportunities to play — like when Bill had Achilles trouble. I like to think I made the most of my opportunities.

Flashes and back-sliding

"I've been playing okay. Flashes of real good play...and every once in a while, I backslide to not-so-good plays...But what can you do?"

Whatever the case, the brawny Eastern Illinois alumnus has come some distance professionally since he arrived, undrafted, upon the NFL scene in 1990.

"Twenty-five weeks I was on the practice squad — Miami and here," John acknowledged. "I credit it for my development as a nose tackle. You'd be surprised what you can learn sitting on the sidelines for a while. You end up learning a lot."

Had he ever been assailed by doubts during that long "apprenticeship?"

"Not whatsoever," Yurko shot back. "You were in that phase where you were hanging in there and trying to catch a break. I never doubted myself. I was always striving to get on an active roster. No negative thoughts ever entered my mind. You keep going."

The breakthrough for him, he acknowledges, came when he beat out Tuaolo, a second-round pick in 1991, for the starting job at "nose" in 1992.

"I was third on the depth chart coming into camp but I didn't let it bother me," he said. "I just went out and played football, and good things happened...The next thing you know, I moved up on the depth chart and I wound up starting a pre-season game against the Jets ... I became a more confident player after that."

'I wouldn't play any other position'

Confident enough this year to develop what he labels "a real good relationship" with his fellow nose tackle, Maas. "We're pretty good friends," Jurkovic said. "We sit and b.s. all the time in the dressing room...talk about the opposing team and what we're looking for."

Asked how he evaluates his game at the moment, Jurkovic replied, "I feel pretty good about it. I think I might be able to put a little more pressure on the quarterback — just be a little more active — be seen around the football more than I already am. I'd like to be around the football the majority of the time."

Yurko freely admits White's formidable presence in the Packers' defensive line has made life easier for him.

"Teams definitely keep an eye on Reggie," he understated, "and they forget to watch the little guys. That's fine with me. Let him take the brunt of the action. I don't mind."

It was suggested that some impartial observers of pro football consider playing nose tackle a thankless job.

"It's definitely not something you line up and volunteer for," John jokingly conceded. "You kind of get categorized as a nose tackle. You kind of get put there if you're short and stocky and you don't play defensive end.

"You try to keep your linebackers free so they can make tackles...If you're not doing your job, everybody knows it because you get gashed for 9 or 10 yards at a time."

Can he say that he now enjoys it?

Continued on page 21

John Jurkovic has handled with aplomb the giving away of his jersey number and sharing starting time with the two newest kids on his block – Reggie White and Bill Maas.

If being a radio talk show host really does become his post-football career, wouldn't having a former defensive lineman on the air bring a whole new meaning to the term "Rush Room?"

– Tim Alexander photo

Another former Bear comes over

For the second time in as many weeks, the Packers have a former Bear in their midst.

Former Chicago linebacker Jim Morrissey signed with the Packers as a free agent Tuesday and worked out with his new team for the first time Wednesday.

The week before the Chiefs' game, Green Bay signed wide receiver Anthony Morgan, who played the last three seasons for Chicago.

Morrissey played there the past nine seasons, ever since the Bears drafted him on the 11th round out of Michigan State in 1985. Asked about playing for the Bears' biggest rivals, he replied, "Being a Bear so long, it's strange to be in *anybody* else's locker room. Things will work out. I'm looking forward to it."

He started 56 of the 65 games in which he played the past five seasons but the 30-year-old realizes that's going to change. Packer coaches told him "they're pretty happy with their linebacker play," said Morrissey, noting it would be tough for him to break into the defense midway through the season. "I think (he'll play) just strictly special teams and see what I can do to help the team out.

"The coaches don't have time to teach me the system. Their responsibility is to the players on the field. I don't expect them to bend over backwards for me."

Whether they bend over or not, Morrissey, who said he had no other offers, is glad to be here. "The coaches here, they called me up and they wanted me. It's a great opportunity because it's a chance to play in the NFL. Hopefully I can help the team out."

Morrissey was drafted by the Bears' previous regime, when Mike Ditka was head coach. First-year head Coach Dave Wannstedt released him Sept. 20. "It always happens," Morrissey noted. "New coaches come in and they get their own players in there, the players they want. That's understandable."

Jim Morrissey plays for Green Bay now -- in fact he was the last man to touch the football in the Saints' game, recovering a New Orleans fumble on the kick-off which was the last play of the game -- but when this photo was taken, he was still a Bears' linebacker, so his job included tackling Sterling Sharpe.
-- Steve Woltmann file photo

Foot hampers Sharpe

Among the players who did not practice last week was wide receiver Sterling Sharpe. He was listed as questionable with a turf toe injury suffered two nights earlier at Kansas City. The injury occurred after Sharpe caught a nine-yard pass just before the final two-minute warning. He hobbled off the field and was replaced by Robert Brooks.

"It's real tender and sore," Coach Mike Holmgren said Wednesday noon. "It's on the pad right on the ball of your foot at the base of your big toe. It's just real hard to play football with that. Hopefully he'll get better as the week goes on."

"(Sharpe) was being tackled and his foot got bent back," Trainer Pepper Burruss explained to the *Green Bay Press-Gazette*'s Sharon Raboin.

Turf toe can be a nagging, troublesome injury, but wide receivers Coach Jon Gruden said Sharpe probably will play. "He's the ultimate warrior," said Gruden, who at age 30 is only two years older than Sharpe. "If there's any way he can play, he'll play. He's a legitimate tough guy. He's a tremendous competitor."

The 6-foot-1, 210-pound receiver has certainly proven himself to be as durable as he is spectacular: He hasn't missed a game or a start in his 5 1/2-year career.

This season Sharpe has been playing with an injured Achilles' tendon.

"He doesn't talk a lot about it," Gruden said to Raboin, "I'm sure it still bothers him."

Sharpe leads the NFL in receptions with 57. After eight games he is seven catches ahead of his NFL-record-setting pace of 108 last year.

Bumps, bruises recede

Just as Coach Mike Holmgren had hoped, more of his players were healthy enough to practice Thursday than was the case Wednesday.

Four of the seven who couldn't go on Wednesday worked out Thursday. But three who couldn't work Thursday are the team's three starting pass catchers: Wideouts Sterling Sharpe and Mark Clayton and tight end Jackie Harris.

Sharpe did not practice last week following a toe injury sustained during the Chief game. Harris had an ankle problem and Clayton, a calf injury.

Defensive end Matt Brock, linebacker Johnny Holland, tackle Ken Ruettgers and guard Rich Moran all practiced Thursday after taking Wednesday off due to an assortment of bumps, bruises and other ills.

Brock had the most serious injury of the four, a knee problem which was examined Wednesday with magnetic resonance imaging equipment.

"A lot of the guys are banged up and sore and will not practice today or practice sparingly," Holmgren said Wednesday noon. "Hopefully they'll be able to go tomorrow. Actually, compared to a lot of teams in the league, we are in pretty good shape."

Cornerback Corey Harris expects to be able to play against Detroit.

Brian Noble, is rehabilitating his knee at the Packer complex. He has been able to get some duck hunting in.

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Family Spotlight

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Ty Hubert Detmer

Second-year quarterback.

Born - Oct. 30, 1967 in San Marcos, Texas.

College - B.S. in Recreation Administration from Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

Family - Wife Kim, daughter Kaili, Age: 11 months.

The last book I read was - "Where is Spot?" (to Kaili).

A movie I'd recommend to my friends is - The Fugitive.

My favorite hobbies are - Hunting, fishing, spending time with my family.

The things I like about football are - Building friendships with the other players.

The things I like best to do with my family are - Spending time outdoors.

I would describe my wife as - Outgoing, caring, very friendly. She always takes time to help others.

I would describe myself as - Someone who enjoys life.

My favorite piece of advice to give people is - Roll with the punches. There are too many things that happen which we can't control.

The most influential people in my life are - My mom and my dad.

My greatest personal accomplishment outside of football - Becoming a husband and a father.

If I could live in another time, it would be - The Old West.

Ty Detmer talks with Brett Favre on the sidelines during Green Bay's 19-17 win at New Orleans.

-- Wally Porter photo

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PACKER NOTES

What's to be done with Bennett, Favre?

by Al Pahl
Managing Editor

The two biggest stories in Green Bay this past week were what to do with Tony Bennett and Brett Favre.

The coaching staff is trying to figure out how to get the former on the field more often -- while still playing sack leader Bryce Paup.

The public, including Packer Report letterwriters, were pretty much skewering the latter. He who fumbled twice and threw three interceptions, thus accounting for five of the Packers' six turnovers in their loss at Kansas City.

Both Bennett, Paup have credentials

The thing with Bennett and Paup is the coaches would like to get Bennett on the field more than the 18-20 plays he worked against the Bears and Chiefs. But they don't want to sit Paup down in the process.

"Why would I want to take one of our most effective defensive players out of the game?" Coach Mike Holmgren asked Wednesday. "That doesn't make much sense."

Paup led the team in sacks (8 1/2) going into New Orleans, which put him into a second-place tie for most sacks in the entire NFL. He was fourth on the team in tackles with 41.

Bennett finished with a team-high 13 1/2 sacks in 16 starts a year ago and led in forced fumbles and fumble recoveries.

"(Bennett) will eventually move in, but do I put Bryce Paup on the bench?" Holmgren asked media members Wednesday. (He asked only rhetorically -- a week previous he asked the same assembly for personnel suggestions on punt returns and we suggested John Jurkovic.) "I don't want to do that. He doesn't deserve that. I do want to incorporate (Bennett) into our defense. We need to figure out how."

Aye, there's the rub (as Shakespeare wrote).

How do you get both on the field?

"You'd like to have them both on the field at the same time," Defensive Line Coach Greg Blache acknowledged in a discussion with the Milwaukee Sentinel. "But you basically have two linebacker-type people. If either of them was big enough to be a true down lineman, it wouldn't be such a dilemma.

"But neither of them have the bulk or the weight to play inside on an every-down basis."

One suggestion has been sliding Paup down to right end, where incumbent Matt Brock has been hampered the past week with a knee problem lingering from Kansas City. But Brock weighs about 290 while Paup goes about 247 and Bennett, 243.

And remember that this discussion was going on during the week leading up to the Saints' game -- a team with a reputation for a power running game.

Blache is worried opponents would run right at the Paup-Bennett combination. He thinks big blockers would find Paup much easier to move out than Brock.

Player shifts affect everyone

Another idea is moving Paup to inside linebacker, where he does have experience.

But the prospect of putting either Johnny Holland or George Koonce on the bench is not attractive. Holland went to New Orleans the team's leading tackler with 63 and Koonce was second with 59.

When the Packers put the pair on the field together against Chicago and K.C., the front line was (left to right) Reggie White, Paup, David Grant and Bennett.

That can be mated to six defensive backs (Holland is the only linebacker) or five defensive backs (keeping both Holland and Koonce on the field).

When the Packers have wanted to get both on the field at practice, this is the alignment they have worked with the most since Bennett signed Oct. 27.

There is also the lesser-used "little eagle" formation where Brock slides to nose tackle, Paup lines up over the guard and Bennett rushes from the outside.

Perhaps we'll see more of that.

Or perhaps we'll see something out of the Hank Bullough playbook. The former Packer defensive coordinator could dream up schemes almost on the spot.

Blache said one problem with drawing things up in the dirt (admittedly difficult at places like the Superdome which have artificial surface) is that pass-coverage schemes are affected -- it affects all 11 men, not just one or two.

He also said the defensive coaches had worked during the off-season on plans to put Bennett and Paup on the field, but that was put on hold during the Bennett holdout.

Fans turn fickle on Favre

And then there is the plight of young Mr. Favre. His completion percentage has dropped from 63.4 a year ago to 59.8. His interceptions have risen from 13 in 15 1992 games to 13 through eight games in 1993. His quarterback rating has dropped from 85.3 to 71.

"You win three, lose one and all of a sudden they're ready to get rid of you," Favre told the Sentinel last week. "But I knew that coming in and I can't worry about that. I don't.

"All I care about is what the people think about in here (the locker room) and my family.

"If I listened to everything they (fans) said and took it to heart, I'd think I was the worst player ever."

That doesn't mean Favre doesn't hear what they're saying. He said none of it bothers him, but the tone of his voice and sharpness of words says otherwise, wrote Sentinel beat writer Tom Silverstein.

"Somebody told me someone wrote in and said we should get rid of Favre, (Ron) Wolf and (Terrell) Buckley," Favre said. "I laugh at that. I don't know who this guy is, but he's an idiot.

"Ron Wolf has done more for this program the last two years than anybody. We are 4-4 but you'd think we're 0-8 and New England. We're second place in the division and everyone wants to get rid of us."

All of which leaves Holmgren and quarterbacks Coach Steve Mariucci to press ahead with Favre.

"I hope he's got enough sense not to let it bother him," said Mariucci. "I hope he's got enough courage and enough confidence that he continues to work hard and believe in himself and believe in us and the system and his teammates where he can make progress. I think that will happen."

Holmgren said before the season started that Favre's second year would be more difficult than the first. He was obviously right. The team is committed to Favre and will continue to hope he's learning and growing through a difficult sophomore season.

Everyone says Favre must eliminate his mistakes but Mariucci feels Favre is doing enough good things to turn his season around in a hurry. He said three of Favre's tosses against the Chiefs were a foot away from being touchdowns.

We heard things like that before with Coach Lindy Infante ("we were only a play away" or "a few plays away."). The trouble, of course, was that his regime was never able to improve from that point.

The jury is still out on the Holmgren regime. Let's not pass judgment yet.

"He's showing flashes of greatness and then tough things happen to him sometimes," Mariucci said. "He will eliminate that."

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Game

Continued from page 3

good win all the way around."

Packers scored first

Green Bay got on the board first with a 38-yard Chris Jacke field goal that capped an 11-play, 45-yard drive which stalled at New Orleans' 20. It was Green Bay's second possession and was set up by LeRoy Butler's interception.

On Green Bay's initial drive, the Packers went three-downs-and-out but punter Bryan Wagner pinned the Saints down with a 60-yard boot (his longest of 1993) that carried to New Orleans' 25 but was returned to the Saint 37.

Two plays later, the Saints had a first-and-10 at the Packer 33. Wade Wilson threw for Eric Marton but the ball went off his hands, caroming high into the air. Butler grabbed it at the 16 and returned it 19 yards to the Packer 35.

From there, Jackie Harris caught a 12-yard pass for Green Bay's initial first down of the day, 8:41 into the contest.

Green Bay got two more first downs before Vince Buck broke up a third-down pass intended for Sharpe.

On fourth-and-three from the 20, Jacke nailed a 38-yard field goal, his 11th in a row.

The Saints came back immediately, with running back Derek Brown breaking a 60-yard run on first down from the Saints' 10 at the Packer 30.

Three plays later, wideout Quinn Early gave cornerback Terrell Buckley an outside move, then cut inside, hauling in the pass from Wilson and running into the end zone to give New Orleans a 7-3 lead just 1:50 into the second quarter.

White sacks 'em up

After a Packer punt, Reggie White greeted the Saints' ensuing possession with a 10-yard sack of Wilson.

Matt Brock dropped Brown for a four-yard loss on second down, bringing up third-and-24. Doug Evans stripped the ball as he tackled rookie Marcus Dowdell and George Teague recovered at the Saint 22.

Six plays later, Favre rolled right and hit Harris in the end zone. Jacke's extra point made it 10-7, Green Bay, with 6:34 to play before intermission.

53-yard FG try with 53 seconds left

The Saints then drove from their 17 to the Packer 35. On the first play after the two-minute warning, Bryce Paup and John Jurkovic held former Bear Brad Muster to two yards on a run. Brock dropped Wilson for an eight-yard sack on second down. The former Viking QB was forced to run on third-and-16. Johnny Holland streaked in to hold him to a one-yard gain.

Morten Andersen then tried a 53-yard field goal with 53 seconds to play and was wide right.

But just five seconds later, from the Packer 35, Favre was sacked by linebacker Rickey Jackson, who was successful at reaching Favre more than once from wide left Sunday. In some alignments, he came in uncovered because the Packers apparently did not have enough blockers on his side of the field. On this play he forced Favre to fumble. New Orleans recovered on the Packer 26 and in just four plays, the home team scored.

Dowdell lined up slot right and ran into the end zone. Rookie safety Teague was with him stride-for-stride. But Dowdell leaped and made the catch, giving New Orleans a 14-10 lead at intermission.

Brooks returns kickoff 45 yards

Robert Brooks opened the second half with a 45-yard kickoff return. He was tackled at the Saint 49 by Andersen.

Eight plays later, the Packers had first-and at the two. But they reverted to shades of Kansas City. On second and third down, Favre rolled right, to the short side of the field, where he and his receivers ran out of room to operate on both downs. He was sacked for a one-yard loss on second down and threw the ball away when he could not find a receiver open on third down.

Jacke then nailed a 20-yard field goal which drew his team within one, 14-13, with 8:39 left in the quarter.

Green Bay took the lead early in the fourth quarter. The Saints opened the period with the ball but Holland intercepted it at the 41. He returned the ball 11 yards to the 30, where he fumbled when hit. Reggie White pounced on the ball there.

Packers pull ahead, 16-14

Two plays later, Jackson was again unaccounted for on the right side of the offense and sacked Favre for a three-yard loss. On third-and-12 from the 32, Holmgren called for a draw in a situation where he looks like a genius if the play works — but if it doesn't work (and it didn't: fullback Edgar Bennett gained only six of the 12 needed yards) he may look like he lacks confidence in his offense (which was without Sharpe at the time because of his vision problem).

Jacke then came on to nail a 44-yard field goal which gave the Packers a 16-14 lead with 7:48 to play.

He had to make the tackle on the ensuing kickoff, which Fred McAfee returned 55 yards to the Packer 37.

Green Bay's defense forced the Saints to work for what they got as New Orleans needed six plays to move the ball the next 20 yards. On first down at the 17, nose tackle John Jurkovic dropped Muster for only a three-yard gain from the 10, George Koonce sacked Wilson for no gain, forcing the Saints to settle for Andersen's 27-yard field goal which put them in the lead, 17-16, with 3:32 to play.

Reggie White pulled off another two-sack game Sunday, increasing his team-leading total to 10.5, an average of 1.6 per game.

-- Wally Porter photo

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JFK assassination

At the news, Gregg pulled over

President John F. Kennedy was assassinated 30 years ago Nov. 22. Let us relive the Packer events of that time.

It was a crucial week in the Packers' quest for a third straight championship. However, the week of Nov. 17 was off to a bad start — a 26 to 7 loss to the Bears in Chicago.

Chicago led the Western Conference with a 9-1 record. Green Bay was at 8-2, with both losses to the Bears.

It was a tough practice week as the Packers prepared to meet the 49ers in Milwaukee. But on Friday morning, Nov. 22 Coach Vince Lombardi came off the practice field smiling, a good sign.

Around noon some of the players lunched on sandwiches in the locker room while others left. Starting right tackle Forrest Gregg put it this way:

"I had my car radio on and the announcer said Kennedy was shot in a parade in Dallas. I'd never been so shocked over anything. I was only a few blocks from the stadium but I just stopped the car and listened."

To this day many people know exactly what they were doing when they heard the tragic news. I had gone home for lunch and our mailman walked right in the front door and exclaimed "President Kennedy was shot." From then on television (black and white back then) carried nothing but news associated with the assassination.

Texan Packers hit hard

The Packers had five players from Dallas — Gregg, punter Jerry Norton, linebacker John Roach, backup to Bart Starr. All of them were in touch with relatives or friends in Dallas Friday night.

Forester talked to ex-Packer Don McIlhenny, who lived in Dallas, and he said "Dallas is closed up tonight. They're too stunned to move." McIlhenny saw the Kennedy motorcade when it left Love Field. Forester's wife, Anne, said, "I hope we won't be another Ford's theater."

Roach said "I believe everybody in Dallas will get mad. It burns me up. The Stevenson thing and then throwing eggs at Lyndon Johnson was political but this Kennedy thing is something else again. That's not Dallas." (Adlai Stevenson had been hit in the head on a recent visit to Dallas.)

Gregg said he was disappointed over the Stevenson thing but "we're not radical and certainly what happened now is not the feeling of the people."

Gremminger said "I feel bad because it happened in a place where I make my home. You wonder why. It could have been political. We have no racial problem in Dallas."

Colleges cancelled, pros played

All college football games scheduled for Saturday were cancelled and there was a question about NFL games on Sunday. However, NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle said the games would be played as scheduled. He explained: "It has been traditional in sports for athletes to perform in times of great personal tragedy. Football was Mr. Kennedy's game. He thrived on competition."

Rozelle cancelled all telecasts of NFL games. No musical entertainment was permitted or commercial announcements at the games. The Pack's Lumberjack band played the Star Spangled Banner before the game and that was it. The flag was at half staff.

ART DALEY

County Stadium's public address system was connected to radio before the game and it carried the disturbing news that Jack Ruby had shot and killed Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused assassin of Kennedy.

For obvious reasons the crowd was somewhat muffled and confined its cheering pretty much to the second quarter when the Packers broke the game open with three touchdowns. Elijah Pitts scored one TD and threw a 21-yard TD pass to Ron Kramer to pace the Pack's 28-7 win.

Lombardi was asked after the game if he thought the game should have been played. He put it this way: "If it was an official day of mourning it wouldn't have been played, but since it wasn't I don't think the game should have been called off. Knowing what the President stood for I'm sure he would have been the last one to want to call the games off."

Kennedy suggested Vince return to West Point

Lombardi and Kennedy were acquainted and after winning the 1961 championship the President had "suggested" that Vince take the position of head coach at West Point. Coach Dal Hall, who succeeded the famous Earl Blaik, had been dismissed and the job was open.

"As I remember, the President said to me: 'Vince can't we do something about getting you to take that coaching job up at Army?' " Lombardi told Dave Brady of the *Washington Post*. Vince added: "I just laughed and the President did not press the point. He must have been joking."

Kennedy wired congratulations to Lombardi after the 1961 and 1962 championship games, both victories over the New York Giants: "Congratulations on a great game today. It was a fine victory for a great coach, a great team and a great town. Best regards. President Kennedy."

Kennedy knew football

I learned first hand that this Kennedy person was a hot football fan. During his campaign in 1960 he stopped at the *Green Bay Press-Gazette* for picture taking. I left the sports desk and conducted a brief exchange as he awaited the photographers.

He asked the first question: "What happened to all those players you got for Tobin Rote?" and he remembered some of the names even though the trade was made four years earlier.

Something of a humorist, Kennedy said (referring to the pre-Lombardi era) "maybe the Packers could use some of those Ivy League players, but I guess they're not good enough." Kennedy made the junior varsity football team at Harvard.

The Packers finished 1963 with a gaudy 11-2-1 (.846) record but the Bears' record was gaudier, 11-1-2 (.917). The Bears went on to whip the Giants, 14-10, for the NFL title. You could say the Bears are 2-for-2 at times of great national stress. They also won it all two weeks after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, beating the Giants, 37-9.

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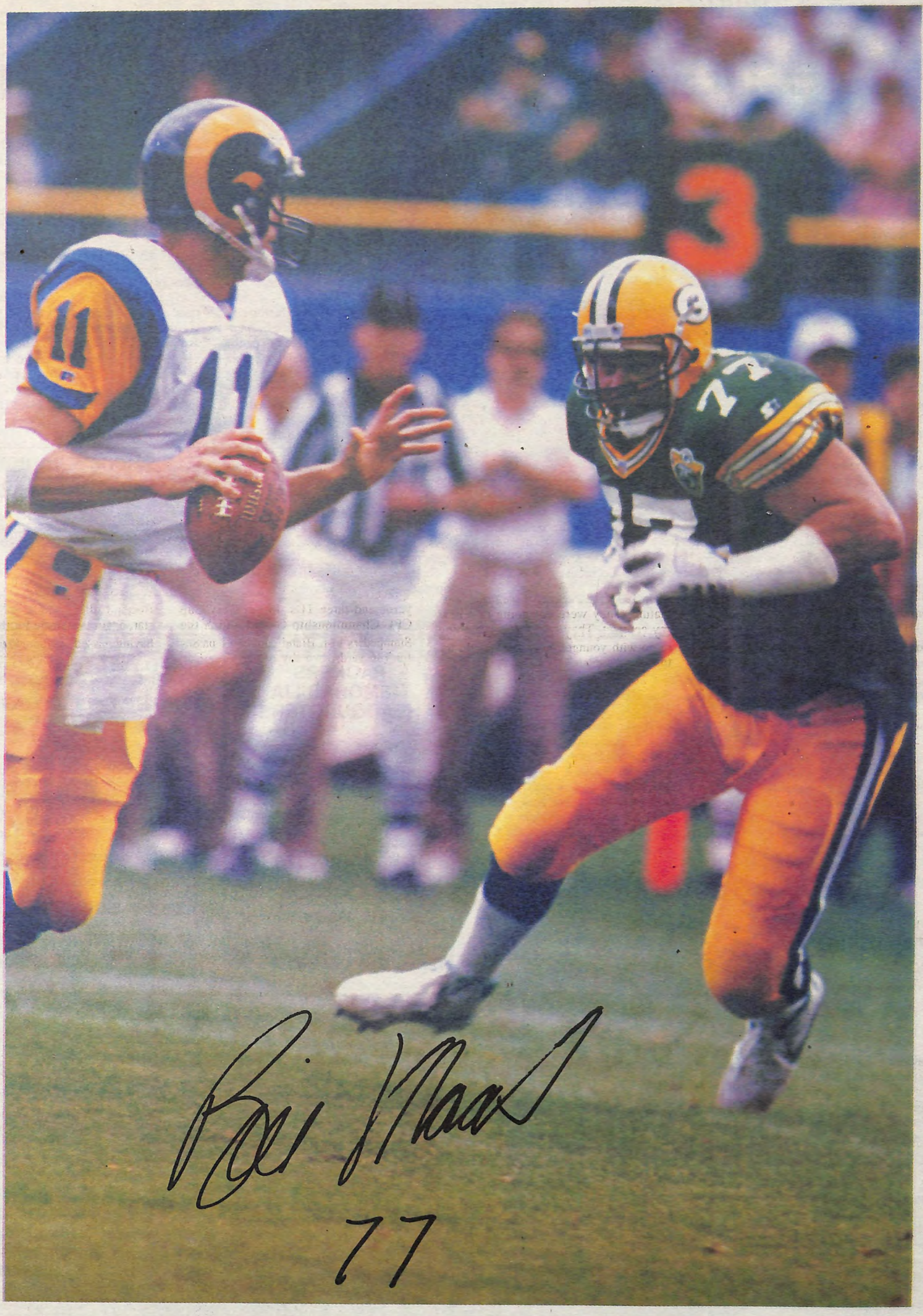

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO: Carl Bland

by Jerry Poling

When Carl Bland opens his favorite book these days, he still looks for answers about what direction he should turn, what type of move he should make and how far he should go in the field.

But it's not his football playbook he's burying his head in — it's his Bible.

Two years after the wide receiver was let go by the Packers, he has retired from professional football and is pursuing a new career in Christian youth ministry, either as a church counselor, a minister or working with a Christian organization.

Bland and his family are living in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, where he helped the Calgary Stampeders of the Canadian Football League win a championship. He is taking three theology courses at a Calgary seminary. When interviewed by telephone, he was studying for a test in Greek theology.

At the start of the current CFL season in June, he was cut as part of a Stampeder youth movement and decided to retire. He briefly considered trying out for other CFL teams.

"I retired because I could sense that God was calling me to work with young people," says Bland, 32, who played for the Packers in a reserve role in 1989 and 1990, catching 11 passes and scoring one touchdown. "That's where my heart is now.

"God said it was time to move on."

The decision to retire ended a 10-year pro career for Bland, who broke into the NFL with Detroit in 1984. He played five seasons with the Lions before the Packers picked him up via Plan B in 1989.

Best NFL years came with Sunday's GBP foe

Bland was originally signed by Detroit as a free agent. He was undrafted coming out of tiny Virginia Union.

"I played 10 years and I didn't expect to play that long. I got to see a lot of cities and another country that if not for football I wouldn't have seen. The Lord has really used us," Bland says.

His best year came in 1986, when he started all 16 games for the Lions, caught 46 passes for more than 500 yards and scored two TDs.

With the Packers, he caught 11 passes in 1989, including a 46-yarder for a TD in a big win over the Vikings at the Metrodome during the Packers' 10-6 season. In 1990, he did not catch a pass but played in 14 games on special teams, mostly returning kicks.

The Packers had let him go the day prior to the start of the 1990 season after Don Majkowski ended his holdout, but re-signed him two games later.

In 1991, the Packers "gave me an ultimatum. They were not going to renew my contract. They said they were going to go with younger guys and I could try to make the team," Bland says.

(Bland notes that all of those "young guys" are no longer with the team, including Erik Affholter, Clarence Weathers, Jeff Query, Charles Wilson and Perry Kemp.)

Successful switch to wide-open CFL

So Bland headed to Canada, where he successfully made the switch to the more wide-open CFL game.

Former Packer wide receiver Carl Bland, seen here returning a 1989 kick, has retired from the CFL, where he played following his NFL career and is currently enrolled at a seminary in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. -- David J. Garot photo

In 1991, he was the Stampeders' No. 3 receiver, catching 56 passes for 903 yards and three TDs. In the Grey Cup CFL Championship Game, which the Stampeders lost, Bland caught 11 passes for 136 yards, two shy of the Grey Cup record of 13. Last season, with former NFL marquee player Doug Flutie at quarterback for the Stampeders, Bland caught 72 passes for 1,052 yards as the Stampeders won the championship. In the 25-10 title game win over Winnipeg, Bland caught eight passes for 116 yards.

This season, without Bland, the Stampeders finished the regular season 15-3. The day Green Bay played at New Orleans, the Stampeders played against the British Columbia Lions for the Western Division title. Flutie, the former Boston College and New England Patriot star, again is starring for the Stampeders, having passed for more than 6,000 yards.

Bland is one of many former NFL players in the CFL. Former Packers who were in the league at the same time included Walter Stanley, Norman Jefferson and Blair Kiel.

The CFL game, Bland says, is "much more exciting. It is a fast tempo. They throw the ball a lot. It's always up in the air. I've been in some of my most exciting games here."

With the wider field, however, the slot

Continued on page 21

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Lions

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Age	Exp.	College	How Acquired
4	Jason Hanson	K	5-11	183	6-17-70	2	Washington St.	D-2b-92
6	Jim Arnold	P	6-3	211	1-31-61	11	Vanderbilt	FA-86
9	Rodney Peete	QB	6-0	207	3-16-66	5	Southern Cal	D-6-89
11	Andre Ware	QB	6-2	205	7-31-68	4	Houston	D-1-90
12	Erik Kramer	QB	6-1	199	11-6-64	4	N. Carolina St.	FA-91
20	Barry Sanders	SB	5-8	203	7-16-68	5	Oklahoma St.	D-1-89
21	Harry Colon	S	6-0	203	2-14-69	3	Missouri	FA-92
23	Mel Gray	WR	5-9	171	3-16-61	8	Purdue	FA-89
25	Greg Jeffries	CB	5-9	184	10-16-71	R	Virginia	D-6-93
31	Derrick Moore	RB	6-1	227	10-13-67	2	N.E. St. Oklahoma	W-93
32	Willie Clay	CB	5-9	184	9-5-70	2	Georgia Tech	D-8-92
33	Tim McKyer	CB	6-0	174	9-5-63	8	Texas-Arlington	FA-93
35	William White	S	5-10	191	2-19-66	6	Ohio State	D-4-88
36	Bennie Blades	S	6-1	221	9-3-66	6	Miami	D-1-88
38	Kevin Scott	CB	5-9	175	5-19-69	3	Stanford	D-4-91
39	Ray Crockett	CB	5-9	181	1-5-67	5	Baylor	D-4-89
40	Reggie Barrett	WR	6-3	215	8-14-69	3	Texas-El Paso	D-3-91
44	Vernon Turner	WR	5-8	185	1-6-67	3	Carson-Newman	FA-93
47	Ryan McNeil	CB	6-0	175	10-4-70	R	Miami	D-2-93
49	Ty Hallock	TE	6-3	249	4-30-71	R	Michigan St.	D-7-93
50	Toby Caston	LB	6-1	243	7-17-65	7	Louisiana St.	FA-93
51	Antonio London	LB	6-2	234	4-14-71	R	Alabama	D-3a-93
53	Kevin Glover	C	6-2	282	6-17-63	9	Maryland	D-2-85
54	Chris Spielman	ILB	6-0	247	10-11-65	6	Ohio State	D-2b-88
56	Pat Swilling	LB	6-3	242	10-25-64	8	Georgia Tech	T-93
57	Victor Jones	ILB	6-2	250	10-19-66	6	Virginia Tech	FA-89
58	George Jamison	LB	6-1	235	9-30-63	8	Cincinnati	SD-2-84
59	Tracy Scroggins	LB	6-2	255	9-11-69	2	Tulsa	D-2a-92
63	Mark Rodenhauser	C	6-5	280	6-1-61	6	Illinois State	FA-93
66	Shawn Bouwens	OG	6-4	290	5-25-68	3	Nebraska-Wesleyan	FA-91
67	Dave Richards	G	6-5	310	4-11-66	6	UCLA	UFA(SD)-93
71	Larry Tharpe	T	6-4	299	11-19-70	2	Tennessee St.	D-6-92
72	Jack Linn	G/T	6-5	285	6-10-67	2	West Virginia	FA-92
73	Dave Lutz	G/T	6-6	305	12-20-59	11	Georgia Tech	UFA(KC)-93
74	Mike Compton	C/G	6-6	297	9-18-70	R	West Virginia	D-3b-93
75	Lomas Brown	T	6-4	287	3-30-63	9	Florida	D-1-85
76	Scott Conover	T	6-4	285	9-27-68	3	Purdue	D-5-91
79	Bill Fralic	G	6-5	280	10-31-62	9	Pittsburgh	UFA(ATL)-93
80	Brett Perriman	WR	5-9	180	10-10-65	6	Miami	T-91
82	Rodney Holman	TE	6-3	238	4-20-60	12	Tulane	UFA(CIN)-93
83	Aubrey Matthews	WR	5-7	165	9-15-62	8	Delta State	FA-90
84	Herman Moore	WR	6-3	210	10-20-69	3	Virginia	D-1-91
86	Willie Green	WR	6-2	181	4-2-66	4	Mississippi	D-8a-90
87	Jeff Campbell	WR	5-8	173	3-29-68	4	Colorado	D-5-90
89	Jimmie Johnson	TE	6-2	255	10-6-66	5	Howard	FA-92
90	Dan Owens	DE	6-3	280	3-16-67	4	Southern Cal	D-2-90
91	Robert Porcher	DE	6-3	283	7-30-69	2	S. Carolina St.	D-1-92
93	Marc Spindler	DE	6-5	290	11-28-69	4	Pittsburgh	D-3-90
94	Kelvin Pritchett	DE	6-2	281	10-24-69	3	Mississippi	T-91
96	Lawrence Pete	NT	6-0	275	1-18-66	5	Nebraska	D-5-89
97	Darryl Ford	LB	6-1	225	6-22-66	2	New Mexico St	FA-92
98	Dennis Gibson	ILB	6-2	243	2-8-64	7	Iowa State	D-8-87
99	Tracy Hayworth	LB	6-3	260	12-18-67	4	Tennessee	D-7-90
Reserve-Physically Unable To Perform List								
55	Michael Cofer	OLB	6-5	244	4-7-60	11	Tennessee	D-3-83
34	Ed Tillison	RB	6-0	225	2-12-69	2	NW Missouri St.	D-11-92
Practice Squad								
26	Eric Lynch	RB	5-10	224	5-16-70	1	Grand Valley St.	FA-92
77	Don Reynolds	DE	6-3	278	1-25-69	1	Virginia	FA-93
2	Larry Ryans	WR	5-11	182	7-28-71	R	Clemson	FA-93
81	Marty Thompson	TE	6-3	243	12-9-69	R	Fresno State	FA-93
92	Mack Travis	NT	6-1	280	7-3-70	R	California	FA-93

Packers

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Age	Exp.	College	How Acquired
4	Brett Favre	QB	6-2	218	23	3	Southern Mississippi	T-92 (Atl)
8	Mark Brunell	QB	6-1	208	22	R	Washington	D5a-93
9	Bryan Wagner	P	6-2	200	31	7	Cal State-Northridge	FA-92
11	Ty Detmer	QB	6-0	190	25	1	Brigham Young	D9a-92
13	Chris Jacke	K	6-0	200	27	5	Texas-El Paso	D6-89
20	Kevin Williams	RB	6-1	215	23	R	UCLA	FA-93 (Den)
23	Sammy Walker	CB	5-11	203	24	2	Texas Tech	FA-93
24	Tim Hauck	S	5-11	185	26	4	Montana	PB-91 (NE)
27	Terrell Buckley	CB	5-9	174	21	2	Florida State	D1-92
29	Marcus Wilson	RB	6-1	210	25	2	Virginia	FA-92
30	Corey Harris	DB	5-11	195	23	2	Vanderbilt	W-92 (Hou)
31	George Teague	DB	6-1	187	22	R	Alabama	D1b-93
33	Doug Evans	DB	6-1	188	22	R	Louisiana Tech	D6a-93
34	Edgar Bennett	RB	6-0	216	24	2	Florida State	D4-92
36	LeRoy Butler	S	6-0	205	24	4	Florida State	D2-90
38	Bruce Pickens	CB	5-11	190	25	3	Nebraska	T-93 (Atl)
39	Darrell Thompson	RB	6-1	217	25	4	Minnesota	D1b-90
44	Dexter McNabb	FB	6-2	245	23	2	Florida	D5a-92
45	Mike Prior	S	6-0	215	29	8	Illinois State	UFA-93 (Ind)
47	Roland Mitchell	CB	5-11	195	29	7	Texas Tech	PB-91 (Atl)
50	Johnny Holland	LB	6-3	235	28	7	Texas A&M	D2-87
51	Jim Morrissey	LB	6-3	225	30	9	Michigan State	FA-93
52	Frank Winters	C/G	6-3	285	29	7	Western Illinois	PB-92 (KC)
53	George Koonce	LB	6-1	238	24	2	East Carolina	FA-92
54	Keo Coleman	ILB	6-1	255	23	2	Mississippi State	FA-93
56	James Willis	LB	6-2	235	20	R	Auburn	D5b-93
57	Rich Moran	G	6-3	280	31	9	San Diego State	D3-85
59	Wayne Simmons	LB	6-3	240	23	R	Clemson	D1a-93
60	Lance Zeno	C/G	6-4	279	26	2	UCLA	FA-93
62	Matt Brock	DE	6-6	280	27	5	Oregon	D3a-89
64	John Jurkovic	NT	6-2	285	25	3	Eastern Illinois	FA-91
67	Paul Hutchins	T	6-5	335	27	R	Western Michigan	FA-93 (D-6b 93)
68	Joe Sims	T/G	6-3	310	24	3	Nebraska	FA-92
71	Gilbert Brown	DE	6-2	330	22	R	Kansas	W-93 (Min)
72	Earl Dotson	T	6-4	315	22	R	Texas A&I	D3-93
73	Tootie Robbins	T	6-5	315	35	12	East Carolina	FA-93
74	Doug Widell	G	6-4	280	26	5	Boston College	T-93 (Den)
75	Ken Ruettgers	T	6-6	290	30	9	Southern California	D1-85
76	Harry Galbreath	G	6-1	275	28	6	Tennessee	UFA-93 (Mia)
77	Bill Maas	NT	6-5	282	31	10	Pittsburgh	UFA-93 (KC)
80	Jackie Harris	TE	6-4	243	25	4	Northeast Louisiana	D4-90
81	Anthony Morgan	WR	6-1	195	26	3	Tennessee	FA-93
83	Mark Clayton	WR	5-9	185	32	11	Louisville	*UFA-93 (Mia)*
84	Sterling Sharpe	WR	6-1	210	28	6	South Carolina	D1-88
85	Ron Lewis	WR	5-11	189	25	3	Florida State	FA-93
86	Ed West	TE	6-1	245	31	10	Auburn	FA-84
87	Robert Brooks	WR	6-0	174	22	2	South Carolina	D3-92
89	Mark Chmura	TE	6-5	242	24	1	Boston College	D6-92
90	Tony Bennett	LB	6-2	243	25	4	Mississippi	D1a-90
92	Reggie White	DE	6-5	290	31	9	Tennessee	UFA-93 (Phil)
95	Bryce Paup	LB	6-5	247	25	4	Northern Iowa	D6-90
98	David Grant	NT	6-4	275	27	5	West Virginia	FA-93
99	Don Davey	DE	6-4	270	25	3	Wisconsin	FA-92 (D3a-91)

Injured Reserve (out for season):
James Milling, WR (post concussion syndrome); **Tom Neville** G/C (Achilles); **Brian Noble** LB, (knee); **James Campen,** C (hamstring); **Shawn Patterson** DE (knee)

Reserve/physically unable to perform:
Aug. 23: **Mark D'Onofrio,** LB (groin)

Reserve/Military (lost for season)
Aug. 23: **Bob Kuberski,** DL (Navy)

Practice squad:

17	Craig Hentrich	P/K	6-3	200	22	R	Notre Dame	FA-93
26	Lionell Crawford	WR	5-10	185	23	R	Wisconsin	FA-93
40	Jason McGill	WR	5-11	195	23	R	Georgia Tech	FA-93
69	Malcom Showell	DE	6-6	275	21	1	Delaware State	FA-93
65	Terry Beauford	G	6-2	280	25	2	Florida A & M	FA-93

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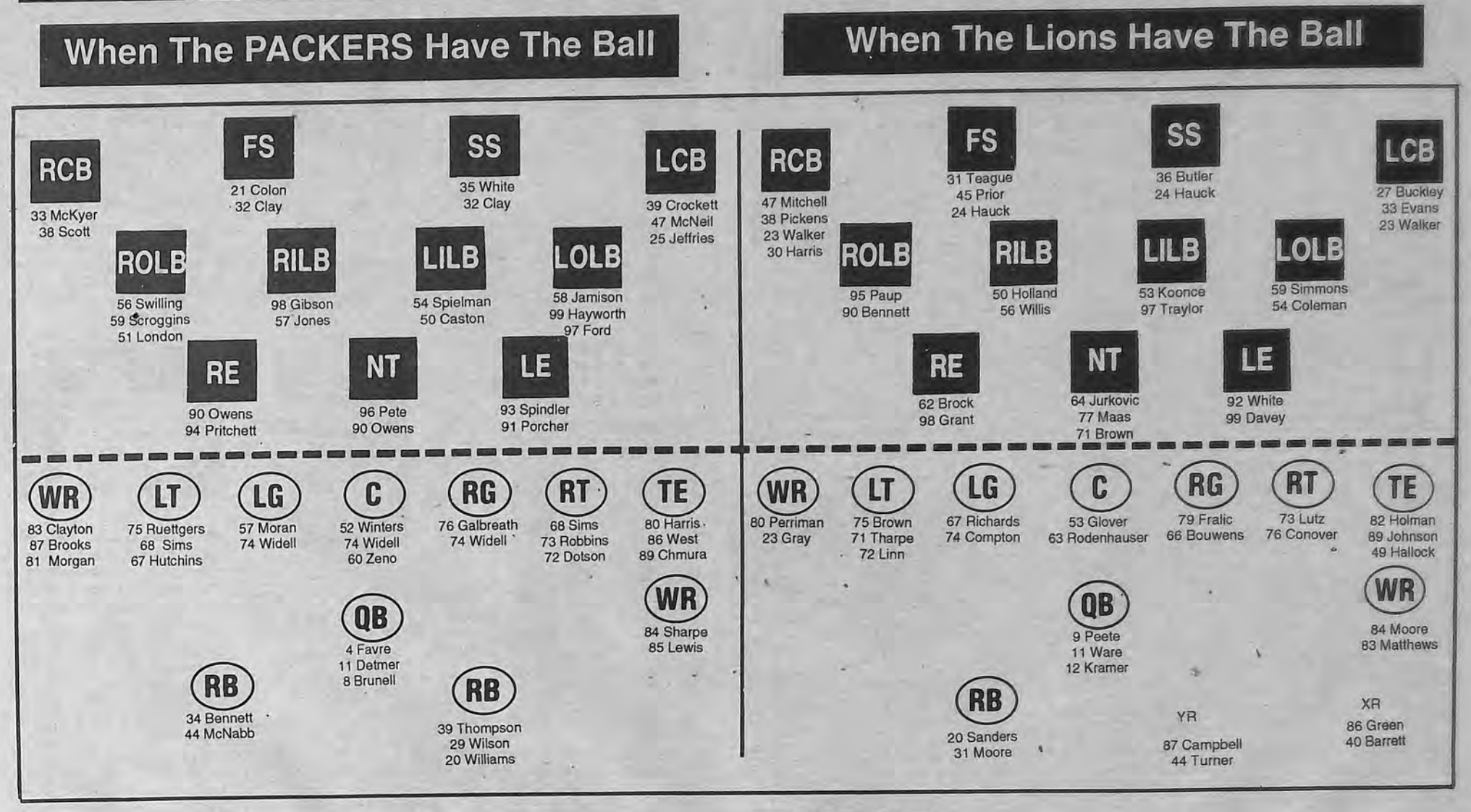

Lions ride slate toward playoffs

NEXT WEEK'S OPPONENT

Weak schedule or not, Detroit's Lions are probably going to laugh all the way to the bank — it appears they may run away and hide with the Central Division crown.

Beneficiaries of an easier schedule by virtue of finishing in the Division's 1992 cellar, the Lions broke to a 7-2 mark and could have as much as a three-game lead when they hit County Stadium Sunday.

Despite their lofty status, the Lions are still not getting any respect in NFL circles, including the Detroit media, because of their soft slate.

The positive side of all the media bashing is that the Lions have raised their level of play after Head Coach Wayne Fontes convinced them they were being insulted.

About the only way "Wayne's World" can be deflated is by a complete collapse of his team over the season's final weeks.

Hoping to contribute to such a Detroit disaster is Green Bay, which also plays the Lions in the final game of the campaign Jan. 2 in the Silverdome. While not even two wins by the Packers are likely to allow them to catch the leaders, a pair of victories certainly would enhance their wild-card chances. Wasn't it only one year ago that the Packers needed a win in their final regular-season road game — also in a Central Division dome — to make the playoffs?

Green Bay has a 63-55-7 advantage in the NFL's longest uninterrupted series. It swept 1992: 27-13, in the Silverdome and, 38-10, at County Stadium.

Line improving for whomever plays QB

Detroit's offense has undergone its share of controversy, beginning with a musical-chair quarterback system between Rodney Peete, Andre Ware, and Erik Kramer. But if it takes a quarterback controversy to win, perhaps Green Bay should try it.

Finally six weeks into the regular season, Fontes settled on Peete and the move paid off. The former USC ace has taken a leadership role and put up good stats to match. He has completed 104-of-163 tosses for 1,265 yards and four scores.

Just when the quarterback situation

JIM BURGESS

cleared up, franchise running back Barry Sanders all but threatened a walk out over his contract status. Fortunately for the Lions this hasn't come to pass,...er, occurred on the ground, ...yet!

Sanders leads all NFL rushers with 977 yards on 210 carries and makes opponents shudder whenever he touches the pigskin. Fontes has also added the dimension of using Sanders out of the backfield as a receiver. He has 31 receptions for 187 yards.

Last week's bye also helped the Lions nurse some injuries, including leading wide receiver Herman Moore's sprained ankle. Moore, who has recorded 38 grabs for 641 yards and four TDs, sat out the Tampa Bay game two weeks ago. Look for the 6-foot-3, 210-pounder to leap for passes over Green Bay's cornerbacks.

Others in Detroit's five-receiver set are wideouts Brett Perriman, Willie Green and Jeff Campbell, and tight end Rodney Holman. Should Moore not be ready Sunday, the nod would probably go to former Packer Aubrey Matthews, who is only 5-7, 165 pounds.

After Erik Andolsek's death and Mike Utley's crippling injury, the Lion offensive line was decimated last year. Thus, one of the club's key 1993 moves was to spend $13 million to obtain right guard Bill Fralic from Atlanta, left guard Dave Richards from San Diego and right tackle Dave Lutz from Kansas City.

Combined with a healthy left tackle Lomas Brown and center Kevin Glover, the line is becoming formidable protectors of Peete and hole-openers for Sanders.

Pat Swilling leads improved defense

Several Lions are getting into the act in an effort to improve on last year's defensive weakness...pass rushing.

Detroit's 3-4 has veterans Marc Spindler and Dan Owens at ends and Lawrence Pete on the nose. Youngsters Robert Porcher and Kelvin Pritchett have entered the picture on passing downs to record seven sacks.

The Lions made a big draft-day trade to obtain All-Pro New Orleans right outside linebacker Pat Swilling. Tracy Scoggins flanks Swilling and the pair have combined for 8.5 sacks.

Inside 'backers Chris Spielman and Dennis Gibson are run-stuffers who rank among the team's leading tacklers.

Despite some heavy free-agent losses and another in a long line of ailments to Bennie Blades, the Lion secondary has survived.

Strong safety Willie White is the leader of a group that includes free safety Harry Colon and cornerbacks Tim McKyer and Ray Crockett.

However, McKyer suffered a concussion against Minnesota three weeks ago and may have to be spelled by Kelvin Scott, a solid cover back.

Mel Gray recovering

Perhaps the biggest area where a week's rest will help is allowing sensational return artist Mel Gray to recover from an ankle injury. Gray, perhaps the league's best return specialist for years, hasn't slowed down in the slightest this year.

Young placekicker Jason Hanson is on target to set the all-time NFL point scoring mark, having tallied 91 points on 25-of-30 successful three-point attempts and 16 consecutive PATs.

Eleven-year veteran punter Jim Arnold is always among the league's leaders as well. He carries a 44-yard average this season.

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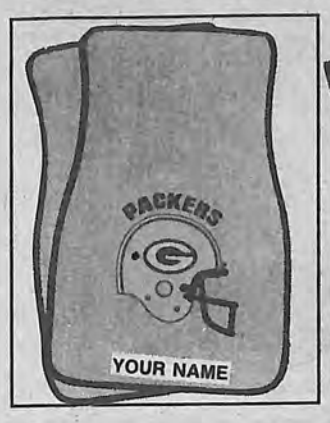

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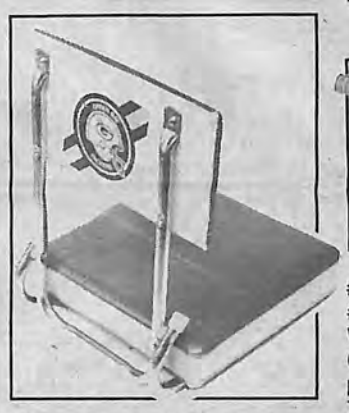

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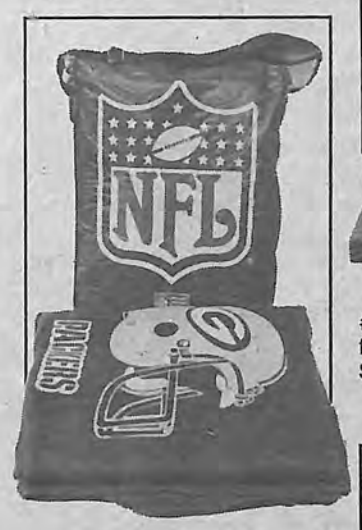

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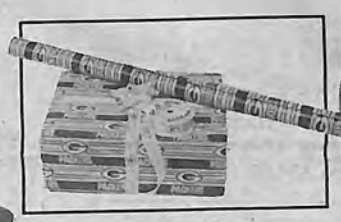

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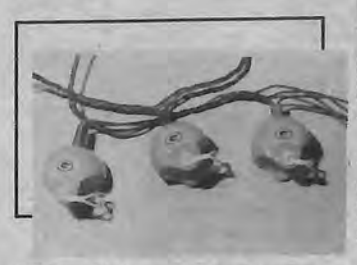

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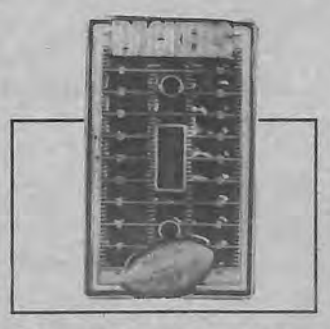

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Hand painted enamel team colors enhance fine pewter emblem.

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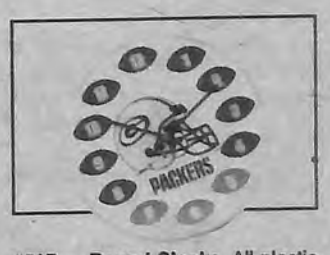

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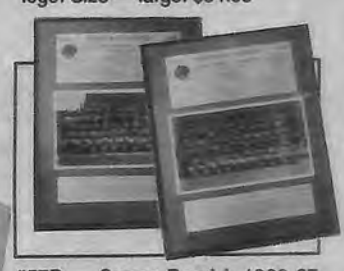

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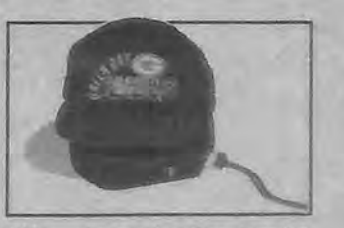

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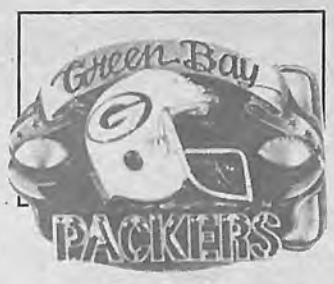

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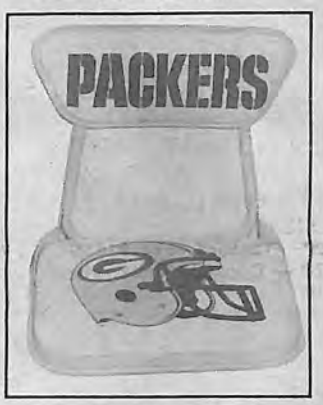

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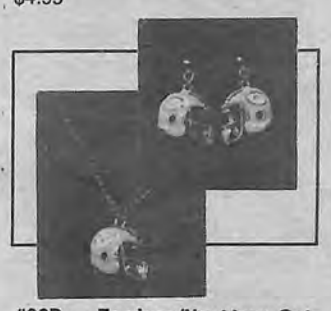

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Week 1

Sunday, Sept. 5
N.Y. Giants 26, Bears 20
Detroit 30, Atlanta 13
Cleveland 27, Cincinnati 14
PACKERS 36, L.A. Rams 6
Denver 26, N.Y. Jets 20
Kansas City 27, Tampa Bay 3
Miami 24, Indianapolis 20
Buffalo 38, New England 14
Philadelphia 23, Phoenix 17
San Francisco 24, Pittsburgh 13
L.A. Raiders 24, Minnesota 7
San Diego 18, Seattle 12
New Orleans 33, Houston 21
Monday, Sept. 6
Washington 35, Dallas 16

Week 2

Sunday, Sept. 12
Minnesota 10, Chicago 7
N.Y. Giants 27, Tampa Bay 7
Detroit 19, New England 16, OT
Indianapolis 9, Cincinnati 6
Houston 30, Kansas City 0
New Orleans 34, Atlanta 31
Philadelphia 20, PACKERS 17
Phoenix 17, Washington 10
N.Y. Jets 24, Miami 14
L.A. Rams 27, Pittsburgh 0
Denver 34, San Diego 17
Buffalo 13, Dallas 10
L.A. Raiders 17, Seattle 13
Monday, Sept. 13
Cleveland 23, San Francisco 13

Week 3

BYE: AFC East except New England, NFC Central except Detroit
Sunday, Sept. 19
Pittsburgh 34, Cincinnati 7
New Orleans 14, Detroit 3
N.Y. Giants 20, L.A. Rams 10
Seattle 17, New England 14
Philadelphia 34, Washington 31
San Francisco 37, Atlanta 30
Cleveland 19, L.A. Raiders 16
San Diego 18, Houston 17
Dallas 17, Phoenix 10
Monday, Sept. 20
Kansas City 15, Denver 7

Week 4

Sunday, Sept. 26
BYE: AFC West except Seattle, NFC East except Phoenix
Minnesota 15, PACKERS 13
Indianapolis 23, Cleveland 10
L.A. Rams 28, Houston 13
Miami 22, Buffalo 13
Chicago 47, Tampa Bay 17
Detroit 26, Phoenix 20
New Orleans 16, San Francisco 13
Seattle 19, Cincinnati 10
N.Y. Jets 45, New England 7
Monday, Sept. 27
Pittsburgh 45, Atlanta 17

Week 5

Sunday, Oct. 3
BYE: AFC Central, New England, Phoenix
Dallas 36, PACKERS 14
Chicago 6, Atlanta 0
Tampa Bay 27, Detroit 10
Kansas City 24, L.A. Raiders 9
Denver 35, Indianapolis 13
San Francisco 38, Minnesota 19
New Orleans 37, L.A. Rams 6
Philadelphia 35, N.Y. Jets 30
Seattle 31, San Diego 14
Buffalo 17, N.Y. Giants 14
Monday, Oct. 4
Miami 17, Washington 10

Week 6

Sunday, Oct. 10
BYE: NFC West, Detroit, Seattle
PACKERS 30, Denver 27
Chicago 17, Philadelphia 6
Kansas City 17, Cincinnati 15
Dallas 27, Indianapolis 3
Miami 24, Cleveland 14
N.Y. Giants 41, Washington 7
Minnesota 15, Tampa Bay 0
Pittsburgh 16, San Diego 3
New England 23, Phoenix 21
L.A. Raiders 24, N.Y. Jets 20
Monday, Oct. 11
Buffalo 35, Houston 7

Week 7

Thursday, Oct. 14
BYE: AFC East except New England, NFC Central except Detroit
Atlanta 30, L.A. Rams 24
Sunday, Oct. 17
Cleveland 28, Cincinnati 17
Houston 28, New England 14
Pittsburgh 37, New Orleans 14
N.Y. Giants 21, Philadelphia 10
Detroit 30, Seattle 10
Phoenix 36, Washington 6
Kansas City 17, San Diego 14
Dallas 26, San Francisco 17
Monday, Oct. 18
L.A. Raiders 23, Denver 20

Week 8

Sunday, Oct. 24
BYE: AFC West except Seattle, NFC East except Phoenix
PACKERS 37, Tampa Bay 14
Atlanta 26, New Orleans 15
Buffalo 19, N.Y. Jets 10
Houston 28, Cincinnati 12
Cleveland 28, Pittsburgh 23
Detroit 16, L.A. Rams 13
Seattle 10, New England 9
San Francisco 28, Phoenix 14
Miami 41, Indianapolis 27
Monday, Oct. 25
Minnesota 19, Chicago 12

Week 9

Sunday, Oct. 31
BYE: AFC Central
PACKERS 17, Chicago 3
Miami 30, Kansas City 10
Indianapolis 9, New England 6
Tampa Bay 31, Atlanta 24
N.Y. Jets 10, N.Y. Giants 6
Dallas 23, Philadelphia 10
New Orleans 20, Phoenix 17
San Diego 30, L.A. Raiders 23
San Francisco 40, L.A. Rams 17
Denver 28, Seattle 17
Detroit 30, Minnesota 27
Monday, Nov. 1
Washington at Buffalo ..... 8 p.m.

Week 10

Sunday, Nov. 7
BYE: NFC West
Buffalo 13, New England 10 (OT)
Denver 29, Cleveland 14
Dallas 31, N.Y. Giants 9
Pittsburgh 24, Cincinnati 16
San Diego 30, Minnesota 17
Houston 24, Seattle 14
Detroit 23, Tampa Bay 0
L.A. Raiders 16, Chicago 14
N.Y. Jets 27, Miami 10
Phoenix 16, Philadelphia 3
Washington 30, Indianapolis 24
Monday, Nov. 8
Kansas City 23, PACKERS 16

Week 11

Sunday, Nov. 14
BYE: Detroit, New England
PACKERS 19, New Orleans 17
Houston 38, Cincinnati 3
San Francisco 45, Tampa Bay 21
Miami 19, Philadelphia 14
N.Y. Giants 20, Washington 6
Dallas 20, Phoenix 15
Kansas City 31, L.A. Raiders 20
Atlanta 13, L.A. Rams 0
Seattle 22, Cleveland 5
Minnesota 26, Denver 23
N.Y. Jets 31, Indianapolis 17
Chicago 16, San Diego 13
Monday, Nov. 15
Buffalo at Pittsburgh ..... 8 p.m.

Week 12

Sunday, Nov. 21
BYE: Phoenix, Seattle
Bears at Kansas City ..... Noon
Cincinnati at N.Y. Jets ..... Noon
Dallas at Atlanta ..... Noon
Detroit vs. PACKERS at Milw. ..... Noon
Houston at Cleveland ..... Noon
Indianapolis at Buffalo ..... Noon
New England at Miami ..... Noon
L.A. Raiders at San Diego ..... 3 p.m.
N.Y. Giants at Philadelphia ..... 3 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Denver ..... 3 p.m.
Washington at L.A. Rams ..... 3 p.m.
Minnesota at Tampa Bay ..... 7 p.m.
Monday, Nov. 22
New Orleans at San Francisco ..... 8 p.m.

Week 13

Thursday, Nov. 25
Bears at Detroit ..... 11:30 a.m.
Miami at Dallas ..... 3 p.m.
Sunday, Nov. 28
Cleveland at Atlanta ..... Noon
L.A. Raiders at Cincinnati ..... Noon
New Orleans at Minnesota ..... Noon
N.Y. Jets at New England ..... Noon
Philadelphia at Washington ..... Noon
Tampa Bay at PACKERS ..... Noon
Buffalo at Kansas City ..... 3 p.m.
Denver at Seattle ..... 3 p.m.
Phoenix at N.Y. Giants ..... 3 p.m.
San Francisco at L.A. Rams ..... 3 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Houston ..... 7 p.m.
Monday, Nov. 29
San Diego at Indianapolis ..... 8 p.m.

Week 14

Sunday, Dec. 5
PACKERS at Bears ..... Noon
Atlanta at Houston ..... Noon
Indianapolis at N.Y. Jets ..... Noon
L.A. Raiders at Buffalo ..... Noon
Minnesota at Detroit ..... Noon
New England at Pittsburgh ..... Noon
New Orleans at Cleveland ..... Noon
Washington at Tampa Bay ..... Noon
Denver at San Diego ..... 3 p.m.
Kansas City at Seattle ..... 3 p.m.
L.A. Rams at Phoenix ..... 3 p.m.
N.Y. Giants at Miami ..... 3 p.m.
Cincinnati at San Francisco ..... 7 p.m.
Monday, Dec. 6
Philadelphia at Dallas ..... 8 p.m.

Week 15

Saturday, Dec. 11
N.Y. Jets at Washington ..... 11:30 a.m.
San Francisco at Atlanta ..... 3 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 12
Bears at Tampa Bay ..... Noon
Buffalo at Philadelphia ..... Noon
Cincinnati at New England ..... Noon
Cleveland at Houston ..... Noon
Indianapolis at N.Y. Giants ..... Noon
L.A. Rams at New Orleans ..... Noon
Dallas at Minnesota ..... 3 p.m.
Detroit at Phoenix ..... 3 p.m.
Kansas City at Denver ..... 3 p.m.
Seattle at L.A. Raiders ..... 3 p.m.
PACKERS at San Diego ..... 7 p.m.
Monday, Dec. 13
Pittsburgh at Miami ..... 8 p.m.

Week 16

Saturday, Dec. 18
Denver at Bears ..... 11:30 a.m.
Dallas at N.Y. Jets ..... 3 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 19
Atlanta at Washington ..... Noon
Buffalo at Miami ..... Noon
Houston at Pittsburgh ..... Noon
L.A. Rams at Cincinnati ..... Noon
Minnesota vs. PACKERS at Milw. Noon
New England at Cleveland ..... Noon
Phoenix at Seattle ..... 3 p.m.
San Diego at Kansas City ..... 3 p.m.
San Francisco at Detroit ..... 3 p.m.
Tampa Bay at L.A. Raiders ..... 3 p.m.
Philadelphia at Indianapolis ..... 7 p.m.
Monday, Dec. 20
N.Y. Giants at New Orleans ..... 8 p.m.

Week 17

Saturday, Dec. 25
Houston at San Francisco ..... 4:30 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 26
Detroit at Bears ..... Noon
Atlanta at Cincinnati ..... Noon
Indianapolis at New England ..... Noon
L.A. Raiders at PACKERS ..... Noon
New Orleans at Philadelphia ..... Noon
N.Y. Jets at Buffalo ..... Noon
Cleveland at L.A. Rams ..... 3 p.m.
N.Y. Giants t Phoenix ..... 3 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Seattle ..... 3 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Denver ..... 3 p.m.
Washington at Dallas ..... 3 p.m.
Kansas City at Minnesota ..... 7 p.m.
Monday, Dec. 27
Miami at San Diego ..... 8 p.m.

Week 18

Friday, Dec. 31
Minnesota at Washington ..... 2 p.m.
Sunday, Jan. 2
Bears at L.A. Rams ..... 3 p.m.
Buffalo at Indianapolis ..... Noon
Cleveland at Pittsburgh ..... Noon
Dallas at N.Y. Giants ..... Noon
PACKERS at Detroit ..... Noon
Miami at New England ..... Noon
Phoenix at Atlanta ..... Noon
Seattle at Kansas City ..... Noon
Cincinnati at New Orleans ..... 3 p.m.
Denver at L.A. Raiders ..... 3 p.m.
San Diego at Tampa Bay ..... 3 p.m.
N.Y. Jets at Houston ..... 7 p.m.
Monday, Jan. 3
Philadelphia at San Francisco ..... 8 p.m.

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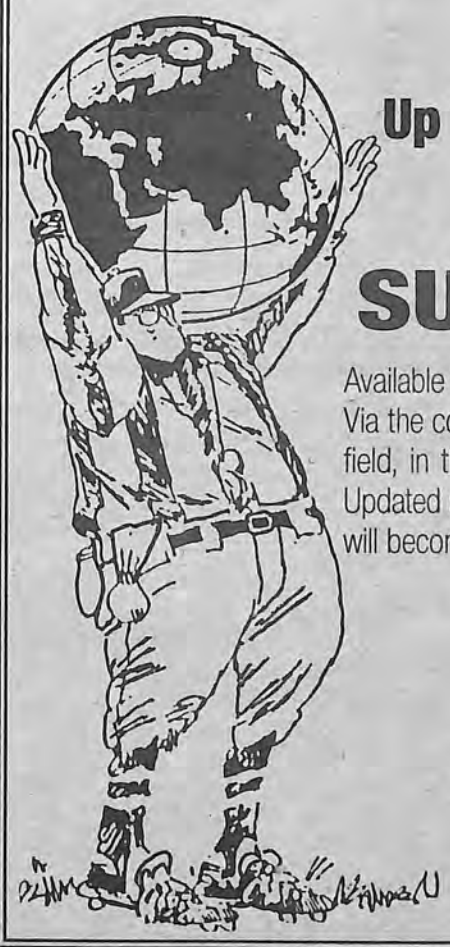

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CENTRAL ISSUES

Bears pull plug on Refrigerator

by John Delcos

Chicago Bears

He was once labeled a "wasted draft pick" by then-defensive coordinator Buddy Ryan, became a cult hero for one magical season, but for the most part was simply an overweight, overrated, underachiever. William Perry is now an ex-Bear.

After years of unsuccessfully trying to get Perry to lose weight and play ball under the Mike Ditka regime, the Bears finally gave up and waived the 300-plus pound defensive tackle.

"These decisions are not easy ones, but it was something that had to be done," said coach Dave Wannstedt. "I tried to be as fair as I could be. It was not money or part of a youth movement. Weight was not an issue."

Perry has since signed with the Philadelphia Eagles. ... OG Tom Thayer was waived and turned down an offer from Washington before signing with Miami... WR Fred Banks was signed.

INJURIES: CB Anthony Blaylock (finger), TE Chris Gedney (heel).

SCHEDULE: NY Giants (L, 26-20), at Minnesota (L, 10-7), Tampa Bay (W, 47-17), Atlanta (W, 6-0), at Philadelphia (W, 17-6), Minnesota (Mon, L, 19-12), at Green Bay (L, 17-3), LA Raiders (L, 16-14), at San Diego, at Kansas City, at Detroit (Thanks), Green Bay, at Tampa Bay, Denver (Sat), Detroit, at LA Rams.

Detroit Lions

Coach Wayne Fontes is a little testy and sensitive these days of criticism of QB Rodney Peete. After Peete threw a 93-yard touchdown pass to Herman Moore off a scramble against Minnesota, there was post-game talk the score came off a busted play, which irked Fontes.

"When Rodney scrambled and made the great toss to Herman, all I heard and read about was how they broke coverage and we were very fortunate," said Fontes. "If that play would have happened to John Elway, the media, the people on television during the game would have said, 'Another great play by John Elway.' Any other quarterback would have gotten tremendous accolades. With us, we were just lucky."

Touchy. Touchy.

Three points Fontes seems to have forgotten during this snit: 1) all 93-yard touchdown plays off a scramble, in fact, most touchdown passes off a scramble -- even those thrown by Elway -- come when the defense breaks coverage, and 2) Elway will go into the Hall of Fame largely because of his ad-lib ability, while Peete has had minimal success, and 3) if Peete is so good, then why can't Fontes make up his mind about his quarterbacks?

INJURIES: None reported.

SCHEDULE: Atlanta (W, 30-13), at New England (W, 19-16 OT), at New Orleans (L, 14-3), Phoenix (W, 26-20), at Tampa Bay (L, 27-10), Seattle (W, 30-10), at LA Rams (W, 16-13), at Minnesota (W, 30-27), Tampa Bay (W, 23-0), Green Bay (at Mil), Chicago (Thanks), Minnesota, at Phoenix, San Francisco, at Chicago, Green Bay.

Minnesota Vikings

If the Vikings hope to play into January, they must reverse this alarming trend: They were outscored 31-0 in the fourth quarters of consecutive losses to Detroit and San Diego. Prior to the Denver game, they have been outscored 54-27 in the fourth quarter.

"It's not near a panic situation," said TE Steve Jordan. "We won two straight games earlier this season by coming back in the fourth quarter. I wouldn't say it's a case of us running out of gas late in the game."

There is another red flag.

After their first six games, the Vikings had the No. 1 ranked defense and had gone 25 straight games without a quarterback throwing for 250 yards against them. Then in consecutive games, the Lions' Rodney Peete and San Diego's John Friesz threw for 273 and 262 yards, respectively. Also, the Lions' Herman Moore caught a 93-yard touchdown pass, and Anthony Miller had a 66-yard reception.

INJURIES: QB Jim McMahon (shoulder), WR Anthony Carter (back), LB Ed McDaniel (shoulder), DT Esera Tuaolo (hamstring).

SCHEDULE: at LA Raiders (L, 24-7), Chicago (W, 10-7), Green Bay (W, 15-13), at San Francisco (L, 38-19), Tampa Bay, at Chicago (Mon, W, 19-12), Detroit (L, 30-27), San Diego (L, 30-17), at Denver, at Tampa Bay, New Orleans, at Detroit, Dallas, Green Bay (at Mil), Kansas City, at Washington.

Tampa Bay Buccaneers

Linebacker Jimmy Williams is in hot water for shoving a female sportswriter -- Michelle Kaufman of the Detroit Free Press -- in the locker room after a loss in Detroit. According to Kaufman, she was among a group of writers interviewing Hardy Nickerson, and as often the case in crowded NFL locker rooms, the spillover of reporters went into the next locker, which happened to be Williams'. As he tried to get to his locker -- to pick up a bag, not get dressed -- Williams shoved Kaufman in the back and said, "You don't belong here."

Kaufman interpreted the comment to mean she didn't belong there because she was a woman; Williams said it was because she was in his locker.

Whatever Williams' intent, the fact is he was just plain rude, and there is no excuse for that kind of behavior. None.

INJURIES: RB Reggie Cobb (knee), OT Paul Gruber (groin), LB Demetrius DuBose (knee), NT Mark Wheeler (knee), LB Hardy Nickerson (neck), NT Bernard Wilson (ankle), TE Ron Hall (neck), WR Courtney Hawkins (heel), LB Broderick Thomas (neck).

SCOUTING REPORT: *Minnesota. Both Gruber and Cobb are day-to-day,* which limits the offense. ... Who are we kidding? If all holds true to form, the Vikings *should* win.

SCHEDULE: Kansas City (L, 27-3), at NY Giants (L, 27-7), at Chicago (L, 47-17), Detroit (W, 27-10), at Minnesota (L, 15-0), Green Bay (L, 37-14), at Atlanta (W, 31-24), at Detroit (L, 23-0), San Francisco, Minnesota, at Green Bay, Washington, Chicago, at LA Raiders, at Denver, San Diego.

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JOHN JURKOVIC
4 KOR for nose tackle's career

Jurko

Continued from page 6

"I enjoy it," he affirmed. "I learned to enjoy it. During the 25 weeks on the practice squad I learned all the little idiosyncrasies of the position.

"I like it," he reiterated. "I wouldn't play any other position — maybe linebacker. If they asked me to lose 25 pounds, I might consider playing linebacker. That's the only position that would take me away from nose tackle."

280-pound kick-return specialist

Along the way, Jurkovic has developed another specialty, quite unintentionally — returning kickoffs. Not, to be sure, the customary role for a 280-pound nose.

"Actually, returning kickoffs is funny," said Yurko, who registered his fourth career KOR against the Bears October 31. "As long as you get the ball past the 30 and you don't fumble, it's okay. (But) if I fumble one of those babies, I'm in trouble.

Needless to say, he remembers every one of his returns.

"I've got two 14-yarders, one 13-yarder and one 11-yarder," he said, appending, "I'm getting close."

When the subject of his media activities arose, Jurkovic was quick to assert, "If I've done anything, I've toned that down. I've got a little 10-minute thing (on Green Bay television) on Sunday nights and a radio show on Monday mornings."

Although inclined to minimize these involvements, Yurko admitted, "I could picture myself somewhere down the road sitting on an all-sports talk show...Yeah, I could do those.

"It wouldn't be bad — I think it'd be pretty easy ... I can talk."

Jurkovic also had a brief fling as a hockey play-by-play announcer last winter as the "voice" of the Green Bay Ice.

"We only did two games," he said, "so I never was able to get on a roll. The first game was rough ... the second game was pretty smooth ... The next thing you know, they canceled it (the team)."

But the John Jurkovic "show" never faltered — nor is it likely to. Greg Blache, his position coach, can tell you why:

"He plays with intensity and he's one of the mentally toughest players we have, in addition to being physically tough," Blache said. "He'd be a great Marine. He's got some inner strength that some people just wish they had...I think that's why he's here — because of that inner strength."

And, once football is finally over for him, who knows? ... If "Guys and Dolls" should be reprised at that point, he'd make a great "Harry the Horse."

Bland

Continued from page 13

receivers instead of the wide receivers get most of the receiving opportunities, Bland says.

Religion a definite part of Carl's past, future

Bland says the CFL definitely takes a back seat to hockey in Canada, where people haven't truly adopted football. In Calgary, a city of 300,000, the stadium only holds 35,000 people and few of the games are sellouts. The Stampeders averaged 27,000 fans per game this season.

"It has the feel of the NFL. In the Grey Cup at Winnipeg, they hyped it up like the Super Bowl. But the year before in Toronto there was no hype because Toronto is a baseball town," Bland says.

Bland is considering moving back to Detroit, where his family lived when he played for the Lions. He and his wife, Jonnitra, have daughters ages 4 and 2, and Jonnitra is expecting in December.

Wherever Bland winds up, chances are he will be involved in religious work. While with the Packers, he was active in Christian athletic organizations, including Athletes in Action and Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Bland is a native of Virginia, where he starred at Thomas Jefferson High School in Richmond.

While with the Packers, Bland roomed with another devoted Christian, former defensive back Dave Brown. Bland's other close friends with the Packers included Johnny Holland and Mark Murphy.

"It was just a good time with good Christian fellowship. I enjoyed it there," Bland says.

"1989 was a good year, even through my role at the time was to have a veteran there while they developed the younger guys. Playing-wise it was not significant. When you look at it, I shouldn't have been there, but that's what God's role was for me at the time."

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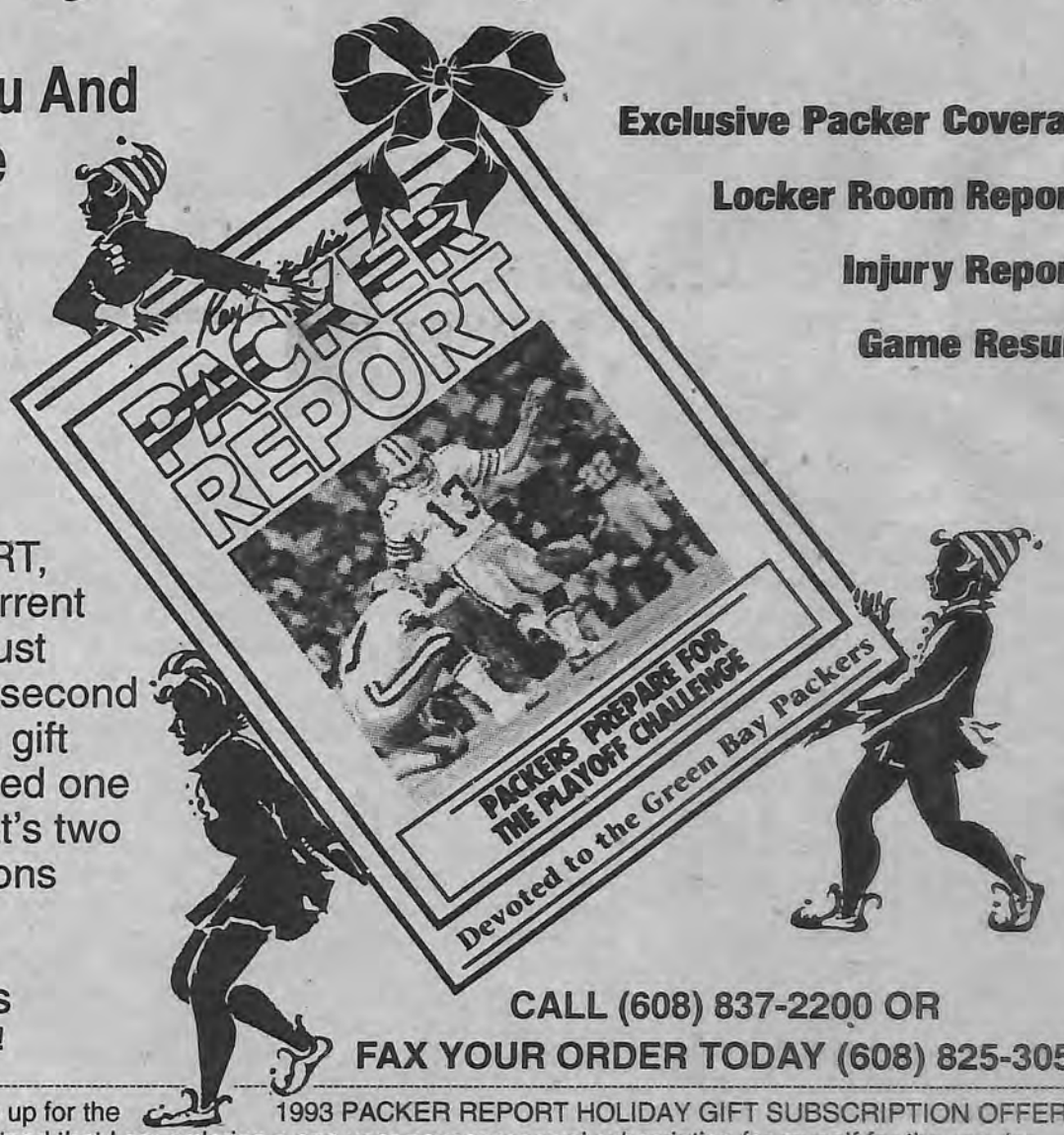

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Officers of the Southernmost Packer Backer Club in Key West, Fla. presented Ray Nitschke with a certificate declaring him an honorary conch (that's a big deal in Key West, they said) Aug. 26 in Green Bay. Left to right, that's Pat Cates, Ray, Terry O'Dell and Steve Rodriguez.

Why *not* use a successful offense?

Dear Al:

Several letters which have recently appeared in Packer Report criticizing the "San Francisco-isation" of our team and the planned uniform changes prompted me to write. I have been as have most of your readers, a loyal Packer supporter for my whole life. Watching the Packers was one of the many things which made growing up in Wisconsin a cherished experience. Since I reluctantly moved from the state five years ago, I have not lost even a tiny bit of enthusiasm for the greatest team in the NFL. Every spring I wait for the league schedule to come out to see if my beloved Packers will be playing a team that gets local TV coverage or will be making a rare appearance in a Sunday or Monday night game. Whenever I can, I travel to games to see the Pack in action. My point is, that I have paid my dues and have sat through the bad years. I think that this gives me the right to challenge those who have written claiming that the 49ers have moved to Green Bay and that changing the uniforms is heresy.

First, it's not the San Francisco offense, it's the Mike Holmgren offense. I can't understand why so many people are upset that Mr. Holmgren is utilizing a brilliant offensive system just because he perfected it with another team. The Holmgren offense is fast, exciting, and, best of all, effective.

Others have criticized Coach Holmgren for bringing in "old" San Francisco players. So What! When you need to fill holes, you bring in people who you know can help the team. Players like Harry Sydney and Sanjay Beach did a fine job while they were in Green Bay and Ron Lewis may turn into a solid player.

Finally, and I can understand this because I am a bit of a traditionalist myself, there seems to be a rising panic over the announcement of a change in the Packer uniforms. I think that some fans were shocked when they heard that there was a possibility that the team would switch to blue jerseys. As far as I have been able to determine, a change from green to blue was never seriously considered by anyone other than a few speculating journalists. The plan, as I understand it, is to change the gold on the pants and helmets from the current "school bus yellow" to a true gold and to get rid of the stripes on the pants, jerseys, and helmets. It's about time! Don't get me wrong, I know that the great Packer teams wore uniforms similar to the current ones. I have fond memories of those years and a great deal of respect for the men who wore the green and gold, but the uniforms were (and are) ugly! Seriously, the current uniforms rank (along with those of Tampa Bay and Denver) among the worst in the league. The changes will retain the traditional Packer colors (green and gold) while resulting in a uniform that will look as good as the Packers and the Packer fans deserve.

Thanks for giving me the space, Al. I'd be interested in knowing how the Packer Report poll came out, even though Ron Wolf announced the uniform changes before it closed, and also how Mr. Nitschke (and maybe some of the other legendary Packer players) feel about the changes.

Sincerely,
David Owen
Chester, VA

A) The poll was about 703-44.

B) You cannot sit at Lambeau Field on a gorgeous, crisp, sunny fall day and say the current uniforms are ugly. I will grant you that "school-bus" yellow is the most accurate description I've heard so far.

— Ed.

What's the Pack done lately?

Dear Friends,

I'll be brief.

Last year was fine, but what has the Pack done lately?

Coach Holmgren is a bottom line man of vision and ability. Ron Wolf deserves the praise he has received. QBs that are 12-8 in their first 20 starts are grown on trees throughout Wisconsin. They don't get much better than Ray Rhodes. Sterling Sharpe. The best special teams in a whole lot of years. Edgar Bennett is a jewel. Welcome, Tony Bennett. I'd be remiss if I didn't salute Brian Noble. Do I stutter? I'll be brief.

Recent criticism from the faithful has been annoyingly disproportionate to any and all offenses committed. Simply put, Green Bay is developing as a focused and fundamentally impressive team loaded with weapons to impact a game. Big plays and bigger plays — that's no good!? Let's have some fun.

The pure of heart always dream of the Lombardi Trophy returning to Titletown. I only expect that our Packers will continue to make lots of noise. We are apparently nearer a beginning than an end, and I'm savoring the experience, especially the good.

This year's team will break my heart, and I am ecstatic over those possibilities. A thousand thanks and let's get busy.

Respectfully,
Russ Hinze
Waterloo, IA

Drop 'em a line

Dear Packer Report,

Packer fans may be disappointed at the team's new look next season unless they let the Packer front office know that they disapprove of the planned change in the team's uniform. (The helmet and pants would be an old metallic gold with no striping. The jerseys would remain green and feature a 'G', rather than striping on the sleeves.)

The Packer front office reportedly is seeking approval for the change from the league office. (This appears imminent). The front office must then decide by January on whether to make the change in the team's uniform for next season.

While the front office may be looking for an image change after years of little success, they're barking up the wrong tree if they believe that changing the uniforms will make a difference. (Just ask Falcon Head Coach Jerry Glanville.) Nothing but establishing a winning program will improve any team's image.

Perhaps the front office is trying to lay to rest the legacy of the Lombardi dynasty, which seems to have haunted the team for the past quarter century. Granted, the organization shouldn't live in the past. There's no reason though why today's Packers can't establish their own legacy without having its management try to make a break with the most memorable period in the team's 75-year history.

Storied teams should keep their distinctive uniforms. In baseball, the Yankees shouldn't change their pinstripes. In basketball and hockey, the Celtics and Canadians shouldn't change their uniforms. And neither should the Packers.

Readers who agree with this letter are encouraged to drop a line to the Packer Public Relations Dept., P.O. Box 10628, Green Bay, WI 54307. Thanks.

Michael Furlan
Washingtonville, NY

Ray was great at Tampa

Dear Packer Report,

First, let me say I have been receiving the Packer Report for 20 years now and just have to write my first letter. There have been many great football players, but very few have combined that with being a class individual like Mr. Nitschke. A very good friend, Bob Kee, and I were at the Fantastic Tailgate party in Tampa on Oct. 24. Ray must have signed a thousand autographs, including my 1968 Packer Yearbook, every autograph accompanied by a smile or a handshake. This is one reason why the teams of the 1960's will never be forgotten (not only because of the championships, but because of the class players that accomplished them).

Now let's talk about our present Packers...give Favre a break, he has one and a half year's experience in the NFL and we have all seen players with a lot more experience making mistakes. As I am writing this letter, Tony Bennett has just signed, watch out, White and Co. are coming. Just ask Buffalo, Denver and Minnesota, it's not enough to get to the big game, you have to win the ring. Some of us have been waiting 25 years for the Packers to get back there and when they do, they will bring the Lombardi Trophy back to Green Bay where it belongs. So come on Packer fans, let's look at the positive and not the negative. This season is far from over.

Thanks again to Ray, *Packer Report* and America's Pack for a great Sunday afternoon in Tampa. Who knows, we might meet again Jan. 30 in Atlanta.

A Loyal Packer Fan,
Russ O'Buch
Raleigh, NC

More letters

Sit quietly in the lifeboat

Dear Al and Ray,

After watching the Bear game, I was flipping around the channels to see what some of the experts were saying. Of all people, I caught Mike Ditka and his assessment was pretty straight forward. He basically said that the defense made some mistakes, the special teams made some mistakes and the offense was inconsistent. However, if those kinks get ironed out, the Pack has a good shot at winning the division.

Of all the things that I've read and heard, mainly in the *Packer Report*, that is the first really short and sweet evaluation that I thought really hit the nail on the head. Let me expand on Iron Mike's ideas with my own.

On defense, each week they seem to get just a little more solid than the week before. The big problem is that the defensive backs are not quite getting the feel for the arrival of the ball. If they would turn their heads about a half-second sooner than they've been, we're talking a heck of a lot more interceptions. As we know, turnovers often mean ballgames.

Special teams the last couple of weeks have been a little off but overall they've been so awesome that when nothing great happens we start to worry.

The offense looks like the only thing that can stop them is, well, themselves. Favre's passes have been a little off, Sharpe drops the occasional easy catch and it looks like they are being just a little too serious out there. That can kill you.

Last year before the Super Bowl, I remember that most of the Buffalo players were quiet and "focused" while the Cowboys were loose and joking around. Tells me loose gets the goose.

The most important sign that I've seen this year that tells me the Pack is a very good team is the simple fact that I felt that the Pack should have lost to the Bears. The good teams are the ones that take advantage of their good fortunes. A 91-yard drive capped off by a 17-yard run, at the end of the game, is as good as it gets.

So, to all the fair weather fans out there who forgot that there were a bunch of personnel changes, not to mention the whole playbook was thrown at 'em this year, I say never jump off the ship when you can sit quietly in a lifeboat and wait to see what happens.

Sincerely,
Jeff Falkowski
Chicopee, MA

Looking toward the future

Dear Packer Report,

Hi, I'm a big Packer fan. I'm 13 years old and I watch all the games with my dad. My dad is one of the biggest Packer fans, he's been watching them for years. We're both in the America's Pack Fan Club. I'm writing you to tell you that the Packers played good against Tampa Bay and the Bears. Sterling Sharpe played excellent both of those games. They should get the ball to him as much as possible because without him they wouldn't have won. He is a great athlete and also has good physical strength.

I also think that Brett Favre is an awesome quarterback, but he throws the ball away sometimes too much. He has a good, powerful arm and throws very hard. He is very young yet and I know he will get better. He is still learning the game.

I was impressed with all the interceptions they got against Tampa Bay a few week's ago. Especially, Terrell Buckley. I'm happy to see he isn't fumbling as much this year. He didn't play as well against the Bears. He let that one go above his head and that lost the Pack about 15 yards. Once he gets his timing down, he'll do all right.

It's a good thing you signed Reggie White. He's done so much this year. He had those two key sacks at the end of the game against Denver.

He played great against the Bears. He had a great quarterback sack. I think having Tony Bennett back will help him because he won't get double teamed so much. He's a very valuable player to the Packers.

Mike Holmgren is a very good coach. He came from the 49ers, he should be. I'm happy to see he is trying hard. I know things will only get better for him.

Darrell Thompson is doing a great job running the ball.

Packer Fan Forever,
Sarah Sarkkinen
Brantwood, WI

Sick and tired

Dear Packer Report:

I am writing this letter after the upsetting loss in Kansas City. I have been a Packer fan since birth. The Packers have been a tradition in my family since my father followed them in the 1930's when they played in the U.P. of Michigan, and I will be a Packer backer until I die, but you bring in Reggie White then you let Chuck Cecil go, then you wait 102 days to bring in Tony Bennett. The Packers are the fifth richest team in the NFL, and Green Bay has no respect. At other franchises they tell the players if they don't shape up they will be sent to Green Bay. Come on Wolf, you had the chance to spend the money this year to bring in good players and keep other good players. If Dallas can come from last to Super Bowl winners in three years, why can't Green Bay do it in 30 years? I know Packer fans are sick of saying wait for next year, Packers fans are sick of seeing good players come and go, Packer fans are sick of the excuses, gosh dog it all we are sick and tired of being sick and tired!!!!

Rick Bongiovanni
Victoria, TX

Enough already

Dear Al and Ray,

I am sick of all this Favre bashing that is going on. Every time we lose a game I hear people beat "the kid" over the head. Look who beat us so far, Philadelphia, Minnesota, Dallas and now Kansas City. All extremely hard pass rushing teams. Every interception that kid threw he was either running for his life or trying to make something happen. It's like coach Holmgren once said, "The quarterback gets too much credit when we win and too much blame when we lose."

If we are looking for blame how come we still have no running game? (Thompson isn't the answer). We could use a lot more interceptions.

I feel that Favre needs to calm down and just play and maybe even have fun. (They should have extended his contract by now.)

That K.C. game he was wound up tighter than a two dollar watch. Last year he was much more relaxed. I can see he's pressing.

What I am saying is Favre is not a one year wonder and will not become like a Testaverde or Everett. Do you know why? Because he is a kid making "kid" mistakes. I never see fear in his eyes, only frustration. He is not afraid.

So fans, please be patient and bite your tongue at least until the end of the season. Give him a chance to develop and in the meantime we will go 9-7 and win the division.

Go Packers,
Ron Boerner
Plainfield, WI

PACKER WANT ADS

If there is a Packer item you've got to get your hands on; if you want to find a place to watch your favorites or if you can help out fellow diehards, your request or offer will be printed free of charge on a space-available basis.

All ads must be mailed to: Want Ads, Packer Report, P.O. Box 9605, Green Bay, WI 54308-9605.

WATCH the PACKERS in San Jose, Calif. at Joy's Place, 701 Lenzen Ave., near the new Sharks' arena. Phone (408) 294-3313.

WANTED: Someone to tape me the Dec. 26 GBP-Raider game. Richard Miller; POB 45; Dublin, GA 31040-0045. Phone (912) 272-6356.

JOIN ATLANTA PACKER BACKERS every Sunday at T.J.'s Sports Bar & Grill; Holcom Br. Rd. Alph. GA. Phone (404) 587-1811 or 926-7952.

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WATCH the PACKERS in the Corpus Christi and Nueces County, TX area at Outback Sports Bar; 5820 S. Staples ST in Corpus Christi.

WANTED: Place to watch GBP games in Johnson County, KS. John, Nelfa and Maya Gorman; 12140 W. 82nd Terr.; Lenexa; 66215-2713.

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